

The Sierra



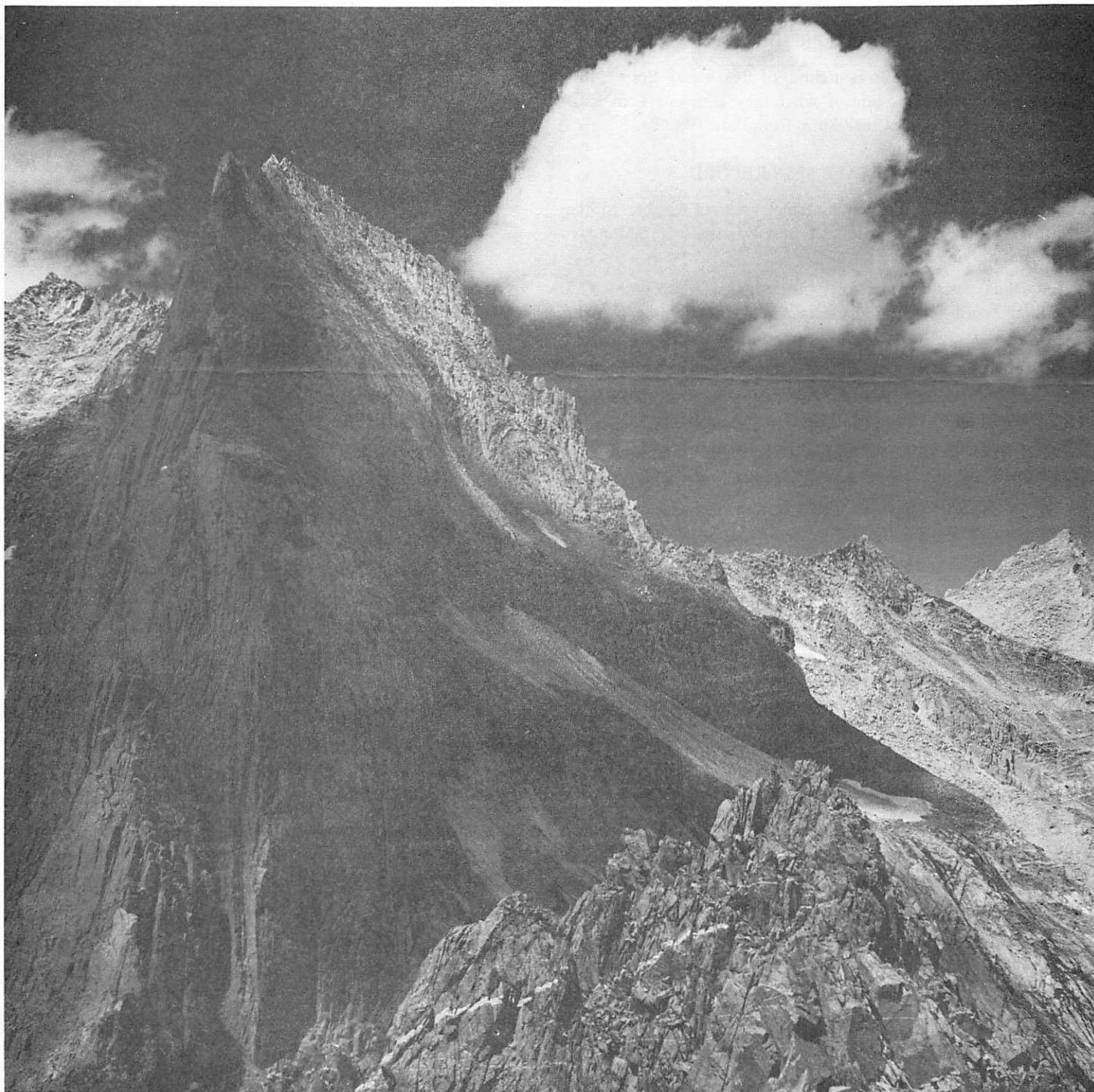
ECHO

VOLUME 17

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NEWS

ANNUAL BANQUET

This is going to be the 17th Annual Banquet. The date is definitely set for December 17 and it will be held at Taix French Restaurant. The program is going to be outstanding – “South Face of Annapurna” by **Tom Frost**.

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EMBLEM HOLDER

Our latest emblem holder is quite special. Last September 17 she was seriously injured on Temple Carg. Not only did she go back to climbing but has now attained her emblem. Congratulations to you – **Mary Riseley**.

COVER PICTURE

On July 21–22 there was a climb of Bear Creek Spire. Most people don't see this side of what they climbed. **Tom Ross** shot this view of Bear Creek Spire from Peak 12,640+.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The SPS annual business meeting will be held at 7:30 PM Wednesday, October 10, in the Lemon Grove Recreation Center Auditorium, Los Angeles. At that time, nominations for the 1974 Management Committee will be received. Ballots will be mailed thereafter, with counting of ballots to occur at the November meeting.

LUMBER SALE SETS RECORD

FRESNO (AP) – The largest single sale of lumber in the history of the Sierra National Forest was transacted Monday, a Forest Service spokesman said.

Ted Duda, assistant resources manager, said the sale of 32.7 million board feet was made to the Wickes Lumber Co for \$3,550,350.

The stands of Sierra pine, fir and cedar are located in the Kings River Ranger District east of the Wishon Dam and Reservoir northeast of Fresno.

Duda said Wickes has until 1979 to harvest the lumber.

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Ten Years Ago in the SPS

by **Ron Jones**

Over the Fourth of July **John Wedberg** led a four-day exploratory trip to Triple Divide Peak. The trip featured a new innovation for the SPS it was reported – as there was a central commissary in use. Sixty people joined the group, a few climbed Lion Rock and 14 climbers made the summit of Triple Divide Peak.

The SPS had its first fatality on a scheduled trip on July 14, 1963 during a climb of Middle Palisade. **Bud Bingham** and **Graham Stevenson** co-led this peak with more than 30 members and guests including 6 Mexican climbers from the Socorro Alpino de Mexico, Patrol 22 participating. Up until this time the only serious SPS accidents had occurred on snow, generally involving glissades and loss of control. **Don Coyle**, with an independent splinter group, appeared to be glissading, slipped, recovered quickly – and without resting began glissading and lost control, tumbling down a steep chute to his death. **Tom Ross** led the rescue efforts.

A second SPS-Mexican joint climb was made July 20–21 led by **Tom Amneus** from 1000 Island Lake to Mt Ritter and Banner Peak. Banner was climbed uneventfully by 26 persons, and three others climbed Ritter while about 7 hikers circled the peaks via Garnet & Shadow Lakes.

Up to this date **John Robinson** had been the unquestioned champion placer of ammunition box type registers, placing 5 of the 10 carried this season. John said that, “He is so used to carrying the extra weight up peaks that he just doesn't feel right without a heavy pack now!”

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ASCENTS

BLACK MTN, DIAMOND PEAK, May 19–20 Roy & Barbara Magnuson

Due, perhaps, to the leaders's reputations, only three other climbers showed up at the junction of the Mt Whitney Fish Hatchery road and Highway 395 on Saturday morning. Others who had planned to go backed out with such flimsy excuses as terrible colds, comprehensive exams, bad knees, sprained ankles, and the like. The group started up the Baxter Pass Trail under a very warm sun, frightening a rattlesnake on the way. By noon it became cold and cloudy with snow flurries. We camped on snow at about 10,700' and spent the afternoon keeping warm in our tents.

Sunday we started for the peaks at about 6AM under a gloomy sky and were able to use crampons to climb the steep lower slopes of Black, finding rocks and snow near the summit. While we were on top the gloomy weather began to improve as we went north along the ridge to Diamond. The traverse, which took 3 hours, involved traveling first on the east and later on the west side of the ridge, working our way across snow slopes and 2nd class rock. Crampons were needed on one stretch. The view from Diamond was superb, one of the best in the leaders' memories. After a long glissade down from the summit we slogged back to camp and out by 6PM, a thunderstorm having caught us with less than a mile to go.

INDEPENDENCE PEAK, UNIVERSITY PEAK, May 26–27 Paul Kellow, Horace Ory

The sky was clear and there was just a slight, perceptible breeze as the participants for the trip began to assemble. The sun had been filling the bowl of Onion Valley since 0545 as it climbed above the White Mountains. This was to be a late spring snow climb and camp but first indications placed it in the more pleasant summer category. Since the preceeding month with continuously warm days and nights, a lot of snow had melted practically clearing the valley. However, above the first bench, ample snow cover still predominated and most of the lakes were almost completely covered. A few gashes along the shore line were beginning to appear revealing readily available water.

Of the twenty-five plus who signed up for the trip, fifteen, including the leaders, were on hand and ready to start at the scheduled time. But because of no-shows and the possibility of late arrivals, the start was delayed until 0830. A very relaxed, unhurried beginning for what turned out to be a trip of that formula throughout all of Saturday and Sunday.

As we hiked to our campsite at Robinson Lake, the firmness of the snow obviated the need to either locate or follow the trail. Some distance below the lip of the moraine, we left our packs at a stand of pines and kicked steps up the predominant snow slope to the ridge of Independence Peak. The final scramble up the rocks to a windy notch and then along the blocks of the ridge to the peak got everyone on the summit by 1030 with only one mishap. Traversing the south edge of the ridge on snow, one of the party slipped and fell and in the process let go of his ice axe. *Unpardonable sin!* He didn't have his wrist-loop secured. No damage though, since the fall was fortunately confined to that one place in the snow. Horace was a little hoarse, however, for the rest of the day following his shouts of remonstrance.

Following a very active picture-taking spree from the peak, the down-climb was via the same slope. The gradient provided excellent sitting glissades back to our packs. For one, it was a costly slide because in the process – he lost his wallet. After a search of about an hour or so, it was given up and we continued on to our campsite. One other party of about eight was at the lake but there was plenty of snow for everyone upon which to pitch our tents. In the early evening, we located sufficient dry wood for an enjoyable campfire. Most of the party sat around dodging smoke and exchanging comments on the state of man and the universe until 2100 when we called it a day.

Shortly after 0700 Sunday we started up the moraine above Robinson Lake towards University Peak. The route was confined to snow and some exposed stretches of rock along the traditional SE approach to the peak. We contoured along the south side of the bowl and after some discussion of various alternatives proceeded up the slope to the north notch which lies south of the peak. Everyone enjoyed his turn at kicking steps and progress was maintained at a reasonable rate. Near the notch, much ado was made of the angle of snow that was approaching 45 degrees.

Center Basin and all of the peaks to the west and south were spread out in a beautiful Sierra panorama. More fevered picture taking. No activity was discernable about the northern approaches to Mt Williamson close to the south of us. Without undo delay, then, we moved along the west side of the crest toward the summit of University trying to avoid any elevation loss in the process. The proper approach was selected and intermittent snow, rocks, and scree put us on the summit. The head of the column went towards the wrong pile of rocks, though, so the tail end made it to the cairn first. This reverse order brought half of the party across a knife-edge of snow with what appeared to be fantastic exposure. It made for some great pictures. Again, the panoramic views that are so uniquely those of the Sierra were amply provided this time from the summit of University. Still no activity on Williamson to the south. To the north, the unfamiliar view of Mt Gould made it difficult to recognize. After some discussion, everyone agreed that all the peaks were there; Dragon, Black, Diamond, etc.

Following about an hour on the summit and having had a quick lunch, the group departed the peak at 1315 and initiated the start of the moderate trip home. The sometimes slowness of portions of the ascent were now turned to an advantage by glissading down

INDEPENDENCE, UNIVERSITY continued

as much snow as possible during the descent. Where that was lacking, scree was put to good use. From the notch, this long, steep segment afforded a very quick glissading descent. Lower down, it became somewhat disappointing and slow going because of the softness of the snow. In a little less than two hours, we were back at our campsite and into preparations for departure. The easy, short hike out to the cars saw everyone safely back by about 1700.

It was a pleasant, enjoyable weekend. Everyone in the group attempted and made the peaks and kept together (almost) as a group. There were no injuries or serious misadventures. One of the most pleasant aspects of the entire trip was the knowledge that we would be driving back to LAX on Sunday rather than Monday with the Memorial Day hordes!

TUNNABORA, CARILLON, June 2-3 Diana Dee

There were 28 participants Tuesday before the trip, but only 20 by the time we got to Whitney Portal. *(About the same last-minute dropout rate held for the Trojan-Barnard trip. Is this something that leaders can count on when there is a "waiting list"??)*

We had been told that there was small rubble on the Ebersbacher ledges, so we came prepared. After the leader lost the trail only three times and the group negotiated a brushy stream crossing, the ledges were found. Assistant leader R J Secor was then installed as the official "trail sweep"; wielding a broom, he led the group up the ledges. No sweeping changes were made, however, since he had to use the broom only twice. The snow above Lower Boy Scout Lake was fairly firm, so the group was in camp by noon, on a bench just below Upper Boy Scout Lake.

In the afternoon an intrepid party of nine, led by R J, climbed Thor Peak by the 2nd (with some low 3rd) class north slope. While most of the rest of the group basked in the sun, a few people practiced ice axe arrests in the usual slushy afternoon snow.

The perfect day was ended in a perfect way – with a campfire made possible by Don Hudson’s four long uphill trips with his Kelty full of wood. (If the Jello carton had caught fire on the first match, it would have been a one-match, non-“boy scout” fire!) Not even Cuno Ranshau’s jokes could drive us away. However, the leader’s insistence on a 4AM rise time and a 5AM start probably got the crowd to disperse fairly early.

At 5:30 AM (the delay being caused by the usual crampon-put-on problems of the inexperienced) we were off up the southeast slope of Carillon. Except for two short sand pitches near the bottom, it was clear ankle-bending all the way (2000') to the Russell-Carillon Col. Once there, we got a good look at our first adversary – Mt Russell. Formidable-looking at *any* time, it seemed to be impossible now, because the sloping friction ledges on the right of the ridge that were the normal route were covered with snow. Some people tried it anyway, but after a few difficult 3rd class moves on the ridge above these ledges, the ridge became big blocks, and even the most diehard agreed that we should give it up.

Oh well, you can't have your frosting and the cake, too. But maybe we could still enjoy the frosting? Sure enough – the usually difficult downclimb from the col towards Tunnabora, the cross-country trek to the base of the peak, and the slope to the summit were all negotiated easily in one hour's time because of the snowy covering, kept hard by the cold breeze. The summit views of Williamson, the Great Western Divide, Mt Russell's north wall, and the desert ranges were spectacular. Only four people missed this: one who had stayed in camp; and three others who weren't feeling strong and, led by Lawrence Lantz, climbed Carillon from the col and returned to camp.

After enjoying the summit for too short a time, we returned to the col and climbed Carillon (congratulating Raymond Lantz on his membership peak), basked and lunched in the sun for awhile, then had a super 1500' glissade down to camp on the finally-soft frosting.

We packed up, then down to the ledges where the stashed broom was recovered, successfully negotiated the ledges, and fought our way across the stream (sorry, R J). After the leader lost the trail only three or four more times, we came to the Mt Whitney Trail, where a footrace got us back to the Portal by 5:00.

OLANCHA PEAK, June 9-10 Jim Jenkins

Hundreds of callers had laid seige to the phones of co-leaders John Robinson and Jim Jenkins even before the schedule came out. No more than 25 reservations were allowed; however, some must have made single reservations count for their whole family, because 41 showed up at the roadhead.

Some were met by John at the Snow Pack Cafe for a caravan to the USFS Sage Flat Maintenance Station, while others milled about the trailhead. We leaders fretted about the 110-degree temperature the day before, and wished we had given everyone a 6:30 starting time, rather than an 8:00 one. All those people made a long motley chain of bobbing baubles as the group snaked up the initial switchbacks, having left on time. I assumed command of the rear, a marsupial pushing a bicycle-wheel cyclometer, while gabbing about trail conditions, trees, shrubs, and flowers into a tape recorder. *(That was for my forthcoming guidebook, which is a plug, in case there's been a leak.)* As it turned out, I was tail-end-Charlie for the whole trip. Just you wait, John, till Kern Peak, then you'll see! Actually, assistant leading wasn't bad. Slow hikers often make fascinating conversationalists.

Several rattlesnakes were seen around the roadhead. The heat stayed with us up to the 7500-foot level, where breezes trickled through a sparse forest of white fir and jeffrey pine to meet us head-on. The only water on the ascent was at Whiskey Creek, where

OLANCHA PEAK continued

we had lunch. Olancha Pass is exactly 5.04 miles from the roadhead, not six as the sign says. Camp was made a few hundred yards up the Bear Trap Trail beside Summit Creek.

A loop hike down to Monache Meadows had been planned for the afternoon, but fell victim to the insidious creeping lazies, which infected everyone. May Heishi, R J Secor, and Cuno Ranshau held forth in the afternoon with their own peculiar brand of humor. John and I and several others walked over to a ridge above Monache Meadows for a look while one fisherman trudged down Cow Canyon, running out of time before reaching the South Fork of the Kern River. The views all weekend were brilliant green and blue, with not even a trace of haze.

Next morning we left camp at 6:30. We followed the Bear Trap Trail to a shallow saddle where it took off down Monache Creek. Up to this point, the trail is in good condition. Contouring through brush to another saddle (10,400'), we then traversed up to a saddle on the crest (10,800'), and kept west of the crest to the summit. Thick clouds of mosquitoes had been with us since Whiskey Creek, but finally dissipated around timberline.

On the descent to the cars, we decided to take the cow driveway to speed things up. Very steep, strewn with boulders that rolled underfoot, and badly eroded, the driveway was only a mile shorter than the trail according to my cyclometer. *We definitely do not recommend it for descending.* About 1/3 of the way up it is an overhang that the creek pours over, providing a chance to strip and take a shower.

I would like to thank R J Secor, Joe Vogel and his son for carting the wheel on the way out to the cars.

MT MC ADIE, June 9–10 Gordon MacLeod

Eight experienced mountaineers (including twenty-five percent Mses: — Connie Eaton and Marge Yerbury) enjoyed an exceptionally memorable weekend in magnificent weather. The Whitney Pass Trail was clear of snow until just before Mirror Lake in a year in which the snow pack was 136 percent above normal in the area. The group left the trail at about 10,000' elevation and followed a route directly to a camp on decomposed granitic sand among the rocks along the north shores of Consultation Lake (11,780'). The weather was so good (no wind with only high thin scattered clouds) that those with tube tents didn't bother to set them up. After lunch, the group strolled over to Wotan's Throne for marvelous views of the mountains in the Whitney region. The whole afternoon and evening were spent in mountaineering talk and in Watergate speculations.

The next morning crampons were strapped on in camp because of convenience. We cut directly across the northeast end of the thawing lake, then along the east shore, whence we climbed a shallow, curving snow gully all the way to Arc Pass. This snow gully lies 100 yards or so to the west of the normal Arc Pass route (incorrectly listed as Class 1 in the *Mountaineer's Guide*.) The exceptionally good, continuous snow all the way to Arc Pass, in spite of the very steep slope involved, made cramponing up this gully an irresistible challenge. From the pass, we cramponed to within a couple hundred feet of the Middle Summit of McAdie. Removing and leaving our crampons at this point, we scrambled over Class 2 rock to within 20 or 30 feet of the Middle Summit, whence we went northward through or around a rock tunnel formed by a leaning slab, then up 10 feet and then down 20 feet in one or another of two Class 3 chimneys to a platform overlooking the broad notch between the Middle and North Summits of McAdie. Our route then descended 100 feet down the steep Class 3–4 northwest face of the Middle Summit to a point 15 feet lower than the notch. A fixed rope was emplaced by Dan Eaton and Tim Treacy over to a large rock outcrop in the notch so as to protect the crossing of the very steep, hard snow in the southwest couloir. The rock outcrop was bypassed (Class 2) on the east side at about the level of the notch. We crossed the next branch of the couloir on the east side of the notch over soft snow to the south face of the North Summit, where a Class 3–4 move was required to exit the couloir. From this point we traversed upward some 50 feet northwesterly around the southwest shoulder of the North Summit where a horizontal ledge was then encountered (ice axes were stowed here) and followed 150 feet around to the west side, whence Class 2–3 rocks were climbed to the summit. The views were so magnificent that we lingered on the summit eating lunch and identifying mountains in all directions for an hour or so.

On return, we followed the same route to the notch, but this time we crossed over the top of the snow bridge astride the ridge to the rock outcrop in the middle of the notch. We passed the rock outcrop on the east side and then down-climbed 10 feet on the southwest side in a Class 3 move into the notch at the head of the southwest couloir. From here we followed our ascent route.

In my judgement, the particular route we followed (Route No 1 in the *Mountaineer's Guide* and rated as Class 3) should instead be rated as "Class 3–4", primarily because of the 100 feet high-angle down-climbing required on the northwest face of the Middle Summit. The *Mountaineer's Guide* Route 2 on the west side could be clearly seen for its entire length and appeared to involve no more than Class 2–3 climbing, although the *Mountaineer's Guide* rates it as "Class 3–4". According to Bill Saunders and Arkel Erb, the notch between the Middle and North Summits can also be reached on a Class 3 traverse from the east slopes of the Middle Summit. The steep northeast couloir, however, must be ascended for a short distance, and the class of the climb will depend upon the snow conditions at the top of the northeast branch of the couloir at the time of the ascent.

Paul Lipsohn headed for Mt Irvine across Arc Pass, while the rest of us under the inspiration of Bill Saunders cramponed down the upper slopes of Arc Pass along the route of our ascent until exceptionally fine glissading could be safely initiated. Paul descended a steep northwest gully on Mt Irvine directly to Consultation Lake, having to face in and kick steps for a considerable distance in the upper portion of the gully. Maynard Brandsma led the pack-out to the cars by late afternoon. All except Paul were able to reassemble for a fine dinner and conversation at Indian Wells Gardens near Inyokern. A number of persons remarked that they couldn't remember a more congenial SPS group.

MT TYNDALL, June 16–17 George Hubbard, Paul Lipsohn

After a few climbers overcame some minor problems finding the roadhead, 16 were signed in and on their way by 7:15. We negotiated some delicate stream crossings over swollen Symmes Creek before heading southwest out of the canyon. The somewhat early start was soon appreciated as the warmth of the day increased.

After some delay waiting for a climber with a sixty-pound pack, we all were in camp just above the Pothole by 3:00. Three tigers decided that 5,500' gain with pack to camp was not enough and set out to climb Mt Keith, an additional 3,000 feet of gain. After going about one third of the way, one person returned and promptly collapsed into his sleeping bag and was not heard from until the next morning. The other two made the summit and were back by 6:30. (They had a long glissade on ideal snow conditions.)

While we were standing around the fire, the mystery of the 60-pound pack was solved when the bearer and his brother came up from a camp somewhat below that of the main group, and announced that *this was the first day of a six-week trip!* They signed out and have not been seen since.

All turned in early and endured a howling gale Saturday night and early Sunday morning before arising at 4:30. We were underway at 5:30, leaving one boy who felt ill at camp. After 45 minutes somebody shouted, "Hey! Where's Ed Rose?" Poor Ed, it turns out, had overslept and had not even heard the party leave!

We cramponed up to Shepherd Pass and traversed over the northwest ridge, where we scrambled over large talus blocks before ascending a snow-filled gully to the summit arete. While taking a breather, who should we see but Ed 500 feet below us on the north face of Tyndall! We followed the arete to the summit and all (including Ed) were on top by 10:30. The weather was perfect and all enjoyed marvelous views.

We descended via the north face over good snow and were back at camp by 12:30. We then packed up and had an uneventful walk out to the cars. (Except for the stream crossings and a rattlesnake that Paul saw at the rear of the line just before the cars.) We were out by 5:00 and most enjoyed dinner in Lone Pine before heading home to end a great weekend.

YOSEMITE, HALF DOME, CLOUDS REST, June 23–24 Dick Ramirez, Jim Sinnett

An easy trip by SPS standards, but a beautiful and fantastic trip by anyone's standards. Eleven left Happy Isles and by Nevada Falls four were signed on. Two started from Glacier Point and two more followed after the purchase of new shoes to replace the shoes left at home.

Immediately upon entering Little Yosemite Valley, we encountered a mother bear and her cub. We took pictures at a proper distance and fortunately that was the last of the bears for the weekend.

Twelve took off to Half Dome after securing camp and our feed. Ten succeeded in climbing the "Dome". The fact that the cables were down made it all the more interesting. Only one incident on the way up. The advance group stopped for a short while just long enough to see May Heishei cutting a switch-back. She was promptly reprimanded and was quoted SPS bylaws, Article 15, Section 2, that upon a second such infraction her boots would be confiscated for 7 day or 10 blisters, whichever came first.

On Sunday, all 15 persons rapidly hit the trail in excellent fashion and spent a great hour upon a peak that has unmatched views.

This trip was the result of Horace asking for simple SPS trips and there is a need for such trips, but where are they in the *Schedule*? Is Dick Ramirez the only cream puff leader in the SPS?

Thanks to Jim Sinnett and all the participants for the pleasure of their company.

TRAIL PEAK, KERN PEAK, MUAH MOUNTAIN, June 23–25 Jim Jenkins

It was 10:00 PM Friday night when John Robinson arrived to give me a lift. I settled for the driving-shift from one to three AM. Making a wide, masterful turn into a space near the end of the Horseshoe Meadows Road, I contemplated the sad case of *Accidents in North American Mountaineering*. Though once it had hit the spot before bedtime, its presently impoverished dry statistics no longer satisfy. No sense in bandying about the sleeping bag I ran over — nothing would come of it anyway.

Five-thirty came and showed us why every camp on the trip would be base and not decent — the air was thick with mosquitoes tuning up, attempting to hum "Stormy Weather". That wouldn't have been so bad, if there hadn't been those quarter-note pauses followed by piercing sharps and a loud dissonant yell, grating most harshly on the ear.

My first trip as a leader! I rubbed my hands in power-mad glee and danced a little caper. I also passed out the signing-in sheet — happens everytime these masochists commit themselves to anything; I know them well. Also I read off in most judicious fashion the duties of an SPS leader, while the sleepy group assembled about me listed until they were ready to keep over. When it came time for Monroe Levy to sign the list, he skipped a space and signed by number 14. "If there's anything worse than a tax, it's a Levy," I grumbled under my whiskers. "Nothing is certain but death in Texas," he muttered. "Wouldn't that be AustinTacious?" John quieted the group, whose collective stomachs were revolting, putting our talk down as mutters of invention. Which reminded me of the pack stations at the start of the Olancho Pass Trail, Olivas and Olancho. Now that the competition at that roadhead has been eliminated, you'll find that they've left Olivas alone.

TRAIL PEAK ETC continued

We were on our way by 7:30. My first decision was an act of sadism: "No split break til we hit Trail Pass! Grumble, Grumble. Honestly, you'd think SPS members were used to having their own way all the time!

My first mistake was to leave the trail to diagonal up the hillside to the pass. Head over heels I slipped on a log, and cut my fingertip to the bone. Kidding aside, the first-aid help of **Betty Jones** and another was much appreciated.

Al Campbell led a small group of tigers up to get Trail Peak, while the rest of us ruminated at the pass. He was back in time, though, to catch Monroe's next pun. "You know, Muah Mountain is such a famous peak that even **Charles Dickens** had heard of it, and wrote it into one of his novels, having **Oliver Twist** cry, 'Please, sir, I want some Muah!' "

Lunch had to wait til we reached the South Fork of the Kern River, but it was well worth the wait. Where the Tunnel/Mulkey trail meets the river on the east is one of the most pleasant spots in the southern Sierra. A balmy wind kept things from getting stifling, all day.

At Tunnel Guard Station the leader tried to recruit two lovely unattached young girls who were hiking the Pacific Crest Trail into the group, to no avail. This became an extended rest break, with the onlookers assembled on a fence railing like a bunch of old crows (or maybe Western Exterminators – *remember the sign by the DPS meeting place on Silver Lake?*) until the rail crashed to the ground and Monroe looked around with a guilty look. We moved on. When told we had to circle around the back of a cinder cone, Monroe sighed, "Oh well, on to the pumiced land." And that's what I intend to call it in my book.

Next morning we found that, contrary to the topo, the trail crosses to the east bank of Kern Peak Stringer at 9000' and crosses back to the west at 9300'. Once you cross back, the tread improves, becomes easy to follow, well blazed; and the switchbacks up to the ridge (marked by a blazed lodgepole near the north end of the meadow where you cross the stringer to the east again) are very distinct and helpful.

From the summit we could see the complete Great Western and Kings-Kern Divides, the Sierra Crest from Junction Peak to Owens Peak, Telescope Peak, Mt Baden-Powell and San Antonio, Pinos, and down to Sunday Peak in the Greenhorns. I've never been on a peak in the Sierra that could beat Kern for views.

Down at Ramshaw Meadows John and I turned over the leadership to the capable (and culpable, respectively) hands of **Al Campbell** and **Monroe Levy**. They led the Muah climb and took the group out, while we stayed in for five days of trail scouting for our book. It was a real pleasure to lead these 14 people, and I want to thank them.

Al tells me that 12 made the summit, and that their campsite beside the only creek shown crossing the Trail Pass Trail on the topo – between the floor of Mulkey Meadow and that crossing – was the best site available between there and the peak. They were out to the cars by 3:30 PM Monday. Thanks, Al and Monroe, for being such good sports.

CIRQUE PEAK, June 30–July 1 Jerry Keating

True to the *Schedule* writeup, Cirque Peak (12,900') turned out to be a leisurely-paced outing suitable for newcomers and families. Twenty-three persons – 14 of them nonSPSers – participated in the trip, which was favored by clear, mild weather. At least 25 others tried unsuccessfully to obtain reservations, indicating there is a demand for a fun weekend.

Camp was located on a sandy, timbered bench at just under 11,100' on the New Army Pass Trail. The location was about a quarter-mile beyond Cottonwood Lake No 2 and just short of Upper South Fork Lake (The latter does not show on the Olanca quad, but is about 250 yards below Long Lake.) Unlike other areas nearby, it offered an ample supply of firewood. Water was obtained from a nearby tarn.

Saturday afternoon was devoted to exploring the Cottonwood Basin. Among the more energetic were ex-Chairman **Bill Sanders** and **Karl Hilleman**, who ascended the 12,320'+ summit northwest of camp and then descended via Old Army Pass.

On Sunday, all 11 who opted for Cirque got it. The climbers included **Lisa Schuler**, a 6-year-old who served notice of her peakbagging prowess. The time from camp ranged from 1 3/4 to 2 1/2 hours, and the route was via the peak's Class 1–2 north slope. Views were excellent, stretching from Williamson to Owens, with the numerous meadows of the Kern Plateau providing a pleasant contrast to the stark peaks.

With a 2 PM return to the cars, all were home at an early hour.



PRIVATE CLIMBS

MT WHITNEY, July 1973 Harvey Mudfoote

We started out from LA at 11:30 on Friday night. I had gotten off work late after solving a rather knotty problem in the lumber yard, and my buddy offered to drive. This was fine with me as I needed the sleep and since he had never been to the Sierra he could view the mountains in the moonlight on the way up. He had driven past town and was high up into the foothills when I awakened. It was a beautiful, clear night and we still had a little time for sleep. We really needed to get acclimatized to the elevation.

The next morning was overcast but comfortable. Since I believed that it's always better to be safe than sorry, I put a quart of water in my pack (there is adequate water enroute to Trail Camp) along with the one remaining crampon left from the Mt Pincher trip, and my ice axe. We ate a couple of space sticks and took off for Whitney. Things had changed a bit since the last time I was at the Portal, so we stopped for breakfast farther up the hill (about 10 minutes from the cars) and a search of our packs revealed we had left the topo and compass back at the car, but luckily had brought the new altimeter Fred Bode had gotten for me from Germany. The map really isn't too important when you are on the trail to Whitney and we figured we would come across the trail sooner or later. We did wonder though where the usual quantities of Boy Scouts were. However, with all this permit limitation fuss they were probably climbing other things now instead of Whitney.

The day proved easy climbing with no difficulties and we arrived at 11,000 feet ready to make camp. It didn't resemble the area around Trail Camp but that wasn't too important as it was quite level and we established a nice camp in between the junipers and a large patch of cholla. We had a quick supper of some dried food I had kept for a few years and hated to waste. It's not worth it actually, since a pleasant meal is more important than the few cents you save. The labels had come off so that what we ended up with was instant cottage cheese, chocolate pudding, and instant onions. We had a long climb ahead so hit the sack early. I recalled an article in the *Echo* about oranges being a mosquito repellent and so before going to bed we ate several oranges to keep the mosquitoes away from us. I had the bright idea that if eating oranges was effective, then rubbing the juice on our bodies would be even more so. We weren't bothered by mosquitoes but the ants were a nuisance during the night and our sleeping bags got real sticky.

Next morning after some celery, sliced dried bananas, and a hard boiled egg, we took off for the summit. The farther we went the more I had the feeling there was something wrong. Even the vegetation looked wrong. So when we stopped to put a new bandage on my left leg we got out the altimeter again. We were almost to 13,500 feet and still climbing, and looking behind us we could see the Owens Valley laid out right where it should be with Lone Pine far down below. The desert mountains on the other side of the valley were very beautiful and completely covered with snow. In fact they looked like they had as much snow as Whitney should have had.

The altimeter showed we were now over 14,000 and there was finally some snow, but this certainly didn't look like Whitney. By now I knew it wasn't, and my buddy didn't look like he cared particularly, either. Not being used to the higher elevations made him a bit under the weather and he lay there in the snow resting as I made the final effort for the summit. I had to find out what we had just climbed. It couldn't be one of the harder ones – but maybe, just maybe, it was Langley. As I reached the summit and looked in the register it seemed almost impossible – I had climbed White Mountain!! How could this be??

After a quick snack I started directly down the west side losing myself in thought. It dawned on me how this all may have come about. When you make 2 small errors and put them together it can really mess things up. What must have happened is this; not knowing the Sierra at all, my buddy apparently drove to Bishop thinking it was Lone Pine and made a wrong turn into the foothills, turning right instead of left. This is the only possible explanation for climbing White Mountain instead of Mt Whitney.

The humor of the situation struck me a little later as I picked up my backpack and headed down to the car. I was in Bishop by 4:00, stopped in Independence for a quick milkshake, and was back to LA by 9:30. All in all a good weekend except for the dehydration resulting from sharing only one quart of water between the two of us during the weekend. After arriving in Los Angeles, I remembered that I had left my buddy lying in the snow just below the summit. I plan to look for him next weekend.

MOUNT KAWEAH, Almost – well, close then Dick Ramirez

Two years ago, Memorial Day, Ed Treacy, David King, and I were fortunate to be the first to climb Mt Kaweah that year. The memories of it having been a rough trip faded and only the pleasant ones remained. With those pleasant memories and with the pleasant company of Ed and Mary Omberg, we proceeded on to Mineral King.

After conquering the toughest part of this trip (the drive up to the valley), perfect weather greeted us that Saturday morning. At the Monarch Lake Trail fork, we met with sloppy snow which became our companion for 80% of our trip.

After the steady arduous climb to Glacier Pass, we were greeted by the awesome sight of Black Rock Pass being saturated with snow from top to bottom. From the distance of Glacier Pass, the snow climb up to Black Rock Pass looked mighty discouraging. After a bit of discussion, we decided to go over Sawtooth Pass and try our luck out of Lost Canyon. The end of that day put us approximately three miles down Lost Canyon at the end of the steeper north ridge. The weather remained great with comfortable evening temperatures but with a little tent-toppling wind.

MOUNT KAWEAH continued

Sunday early, for me, we left our camp at 7:30. (I say early because usually on Sunday, the first thing I do is jump out of bed and have lunch.) We proceeded to climb over the lowest part of Lost Canyon's north ridge and suddenly dropped into the Big Five Lakes area and down to the Big Arroyo. With a precarious, roped crossing, we traversed the rushing stream.

Then we started the energy-sapping climb of rock and scree up the south slope of Mt Kaweah. We reached an area above the High Sierra Trail when we again encountered our constant companion, slushy, too often retractable snow! Finding the inevitable comfortable log we sat and had a snack. Looking directly north we had only to reach out to touch the summit. That is – if your arm was 2,500 feet long! There was a rib on Mt Kaweah exposed for those who prefer rock to snow and a snow field that would lend itself to a spectacular glissade.

But wisely, though reluctantly, we decided that too much energy and daylight would have to be expended to return to Lost Canyon, and that we best not count on our early season lack of acclimation and conditioning. The Ombergs and I had been so fascinated by X-country skiing this winter, that our conditioning was sacrificed for the fun we had. Besides, I thought, if California gets the earthquake so frequently predicted, we would be able to water ski to the summit in the near future.

On our descent we were surprised by the fact that the Big Arroyo had grown by 6 to 8 inches since our morning crossing. Another precarious roped crossing put us safely and gratefully on the other side. Now the climb up to Big Five Lakes and over the ridge to Lost Canyon. Snow conditions weren't the most desirable and at one point we took to rock – one of us made the first 25 feet and belayed the other two. From then on it was cruddy soft snow and snowcups back to camp. That evening and next morning we were startled by avalanches from Lost Canyon's north ridge. Fortunately they did not reach the middle canyon where we traveled and we camped below this area.

Monday God blessed us with two travelers about an hour ahead of us and we used their steps up and over Sawtooth Pass. Glissading as often as possible we quickly reached the trail that was free of snow. It felt almost as good as sex and we arrived at the car with smiles on our faces.

Sad because we missed our objective? Hardly, considering the effort we put out and the pleasant company. I'd rank it as one of my finest trips. Mt Kaweah has been there over a hundred years, I've been told, and will probably be there next time I get the urge.

We did have one stroke of bad luck. We did not encounter one Mexican restaurant on the journey home where we might have regained our strength.

NOTICE!

The Echo has lost its publisher and is in great need of a company, organization, or individual that is able to print the newsletter for the cost of the paper it is printed on. We have a firm offer of a low price in an emergency that will cost the Section more to print the paper than we charge for it. If you can come up with anything that might help, please let someone on the management committee know – or me. Thanks.

Betty Dessert, Editor

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