

The Sierra



ECHO

VOLUME 29

MAY-JUNE

1985

NO. 3



REMINDER: Beginning in July, S.P.S. MONTHLY MEETINGS are at the GRIFFITH PARK RANGER'S STATION. Changes always cause problems, but we were unable to confirm the availability of DWP facilities in time for the chapter's summer schedule. Griffith Park is our new home at least through October. For those unfamiliar with the location, we hope the map is an aid.

The climbing season is here. The best way to continue to pursue our pastime is safely. Here's to a safe and full climbing season with the SPS.

One of our primary concerns is the continued vitality of our section. The maintenance of the spirit and vitality of the S.P.S. would seem to depend upon continued participation of our present membership and upon the introduction of active & capable new people to become members and leaders. Toward this end, we would like opinions of how to interest capable new prospects in becoming active mountaineers with us. One way may be our leaders' including a few more outings aimed specifically at encouraging first trips with our section. Many people are hooked by exposure to our activities in the Sierras. An elite cadre with a lot of esprit de corps is grand. Continued introduction of capable members and their interests can help maintain the vitality of a dynamic group.

Dave D
Dave Dykeman

The art of climbing appeals
To those who taste life
In big bites and swallow
The consequences of their actions.

Eyes from the ground see
All difficulties as impassable,
Halting the timid ones;
Encouraging the boldest.

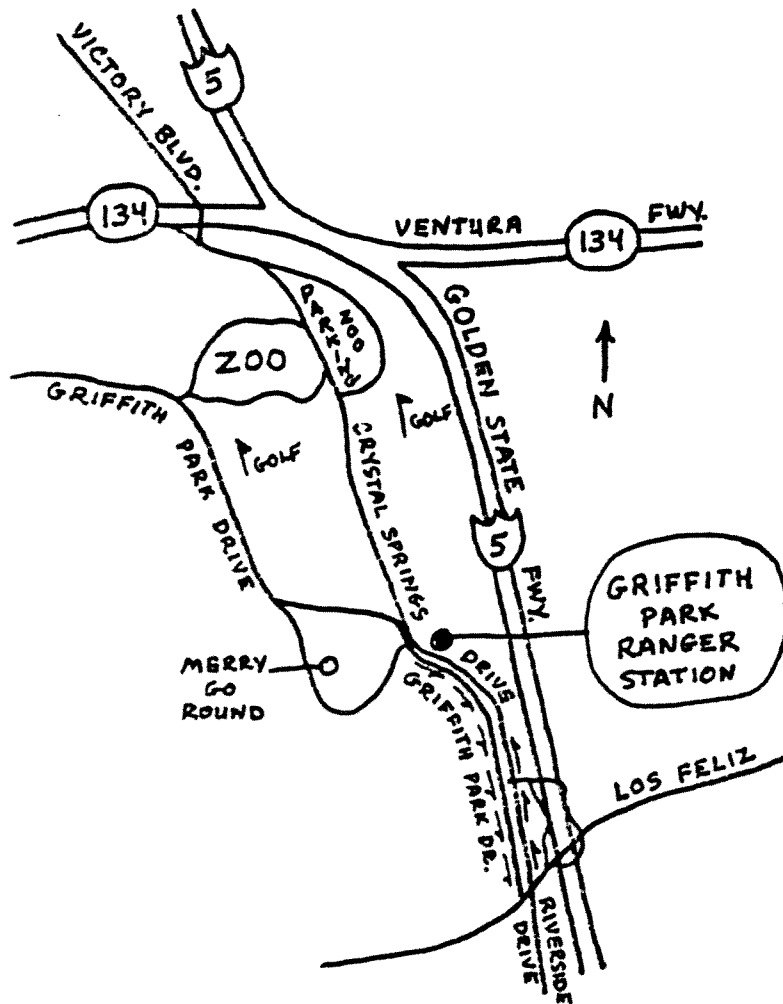
Should the route prove too hard,
Should the mind panic in fear,
Then the fall will come
With absolute certainty.

Through confidence in body strength,
Alertness in each deliberate move;
Progress is achieved by inches--
Defeat, a finger-slip away.

Success is found, not on
Who makes the top first,
But on what was overcome
Inside the climber's soul.

Maybe much of life is climbing.

--R. T. Hartunian
12/10/84



COVER PHOTO: Firebird (right center) and Mt. Sill in storm from summit of the Thumb. Thanks to Tom Ross, photographer.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

NEW EMBLEM HOLDERS

Donn Cook (North Palisade)
Jeff Koepke (Mt. Williamson)

NEW MEMBERS

Rose Certini
Mitch Miller

NEW ECHO SUBSCRIBERS

Carolyn West
Don Weidner
Jeff Stayer
Tom McNicholas
David Horrnie
Harry Freimanis

NOTICE - - LEADERS - - NOTICE

The trip writeup deadline for the schedule for November '85 through February '86 (inclusive) is 8 July 1985. Please submit your trips to Maris Valkass no later than 28 June so that the Management Committee has time to review them. Thank you for your support of SPS and cooperation.

SPS PROGRAM FOR JULY

July 10 Meeting: "Classic Winter Climbs in the Sierra" by Alois Sarz. Scale the East Face of Mt. Whitney, ice in Mendel Couloir and other icy ascents of the Sierras. Refreshments. Griffith Park Auditorium. 7:30 p.m.

SPS TRIP REMINDER

JUN 24-27

MON-THU

M: Hilgard (13,361'), Gabb (13,722'), Recess (12,836'); Backpack through Granite Park & Italy Pass to campsite at Lake Italy. Climb peaks in next two days. Thu is to come out, but we'll try to be early. Sase & quals to Leaders: NORM ROHN, RON JONES.

JUL 4-7

THU-SUN

M: Finger Pk (12,404'), Tunemah Pk (11,894'); These peaks involve several miles of backpacking, only the well conditioned need apply. Snow gear req'd. Send sase with experience to Leader: JIM MURPHY. Asst: RJ SECOR.

SECOND APPEAL: NEW MEMBERSHIP RECORDS CHAIRMAN STILL NEEDED!

Ron Bartell has been keeping the membership records for SPS since 1981 and would like to resign. If you have a personal computer or access to a computer and are interested in doing Ron's job, talk to him or Dave Dykeman.

VOLUME 29 PEAK INDEX (1985)

Table with 6 columns of peak names and their corresponding volume numbers (e.g., Abbot 29-1, Colosseum 29-2, Gardiner 29-2,3, Julius Caesar 29-2, Perkins 29-2, Striped 29-2).

SIERRA PEAKS SECTION
SENIOR EMBLEMS AND LIST FINISHERS

1. Smatko, Andy	8/11/70	#1-10/25/64	58. Camphausen, Fred	10/31/79
2. Ross, Tom		#2-1965	59. Sparks, Don	6/15/80
3. Lilley, Barbara		#3-1969	60. Barnes, George	6/17/80
4. Castel, John	8/11/70		61. Erb, Jim	7/4/80
5. Jones, Ron	8/20/71		62. Van Dalsem, Dale	9/20/80
6. Keating, Jerry	9/11/71	#4-8/19/72	63. Backus, John	1981
7. MacLeod, Gordon	7/27/72	#5-9/3/73	64. Hicks, Bob	7/81
8. Erb, Arkel		#6-1974	65. McFadden, Harold	7/17/81
9. Mantle, Doug		#7-1974	66. Toby, George	8/81
10. Treacy, Timothy	7/5/74	#12-8/5/79	67. McMannes, Mary	8/81
11. Dee, Diana	8/3/74		68. Benson, Al	8/81
12. Treacy, Ed	8/3/74	#8-8/13/76	69. Hammond, David	9/81
13. Schuler, Bill	9/28/74	#15-6/15/80	70. Palmer, Don	6/82
14. Magnuson, Barbara	11/27/74	#11-9/29/78	71. Dykeman, Dave	7/82
15. Magnuson, Roy	11/27/74	#10-9/29/78	72. Sullivan, Kevin	7/82
16. Ranschau, Cunc	9/13/75	#14-10/7/79	73. Sullivan, Sherry	7/82
17. Cameron, Betty	6/20/76		74. Murphy, Jim	8/82
18. Kabler, Walton	6/20/76		75. Bradley, Bill	9/83
19. Gnagy, Rich	8/14/76		76. Holladay, Dolores	9/83
20. Riseley, Frank	8/27/76		77. Titus, Jay	9/83
21. Ward, Roy	9/13/76		78. Mary Sue Miller	7/83
22. Hoover, William	10/24/76	#20-1981	79. Ron Hudson	7/84
23. Schumacher, Eric	10/20/76		80. Lance Dixon	8/84
24. Hoover, Victoria	5/1/77	#19-1981	81. Mark Goebel	1/85
25. Campbell, David	5/29/77		82. Lloyd Brown	1/85
26. Secor, R.J.	6/13/77			
27. Meyers, Frank	6/25/77			
28. Riseley, Mike	6/26/77			
29. Hubbard, George	7/3/77			
30. Fletcher, Elton	7/18/77	#9-7/19/77		
31. Hoover, Nathan	7/26/77	#18-1981		
32. Hellman, John	8/7/77			
33. McRuer, Duane	8/28/77			
34. Akawie, Richard	9/18/77			
35. Reber, Barbara	9/25/77			
36. Bartell, Ron	11/1/77	#21-8/82		
37. Roseley, Jonie	6/15/78			
38. Grams, Jack	7/12/78	#17-1981		
39. Vasilik, Joe	8/12/78			
40. Rossell, Bill T.	9/26/78			
41. Vernon, Greg	10/11/78	#16-7/25/80		
42. Jali, Dick	10/17/78			
43. Lorr, Michael	10/30/78			
44. Bihl, Mary	7/1/79			
45. McDermott, John	8/15/79			
46. Holleman, Deanna D.	8/18/79			
47. Holleman, Gerald W.	8/18/79			
48. Hoover, Frances	8/19/79	#22-10/83		
49. Petitjean, Jon	8/26/79			
50. Petitjean, Bernie	8/26/79			
51. Petitjean, Lu	9/3/79			
52. Sanders, Bill		#13-9/15/79		
53. Amneus, Tom	9/17/79			
54. Davis, Sid	9/22/79			
55. Rohn, Norman F.	9/23/79			
56. Machleder, Larry	9/29/79			
57. Mauk, Gene	10/15/79			

SECOND TIME LIST
FINISHERS

1. Doug Mantie 9/82

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Ron Jones

Five Years Ago in the SPS

Exceptionally heavy spring snows made for interesting spring climbs in the Sierra during 1980. Jerry Keating and Walt Whisman led 27 in a backpack attempt of Kern Pk. They were turned back by heavy snow. Mark Goebel led a ski attempt of Haeckel and Wallace over Memorial Day. The second day in they encountered two sharp earthquakes which dislodged snow and rock avalanches. They turned back not knowing what else mother nature would offer. George Neuner led 10 on Crag and Smith in early June. Van Dalsem and Murphy led an 8 day trip through wall to wall snow on an early June trip into the Kaweahs. Don Sparks became Senior Emblem holder #59 on this trip. Jon Lutz and Joe McCosker led 4 to 6 people on a 7 day late June expedition to 12 northern Sierra peaks ranging from Pyramid to Sierra Butte. Sherry Harsh joined the Section, George Barnes became Senior List holder #60 and Bill Schuler became list finisher #15.

Ten Years Ago

New members included Mel Johnson, Tony Zaleski and Gary Richardson. Bill Bradley and John Klinepeter led 27 to Smith and Crag May 10-11. There was a strong flow of water at their crossing of the So Fork of the Kern. A single rope was used as a fixed line. One hiker stumbled during the crossing, was able to shed his pack which was unfastened at the waist but he had improperly tied his self belay into the fixed line, a strap snapped and he was swept away down stream. After 6 or 7 minutes in the river he came near shore, grabbed or was snagged by a bush and was assisted out as could not help himself. Morals: Don't use only a fixed line at dangerous stream crossings and use a secure self belay anchor. Jim Murphy led 7 on a climb to University and Independence in good snow; Rohn and Diana Dee led 15 to Bloody and Morrison; Secor and Bill Stauffer led 9 on Coloseum and Perkins; John Robinson led 20 on a climb of Rockhouse. A Vagmarken climb in Peru put 7 on Huascaran Norte and 5 on the higher south peak.

Twenty Years Ago

New members this period in 1965 included Dick Sykes, Wally Henry, Elton Fletcher, Bob Michael and Kent Larson. George Barnes became emblem holder #99. John Robinson and Frank Sanborn led 50 on a SPS snow practice in San Gorgonio bowl. One climber lost control on a glissade, hit a tree and broke a leg in 3 places. Jess Logan led a conservation trip to Onion Valley where 7 climbers helped plant trees on Saturday and climbed University Pk on Sunday. Tom Amneus led 22 to Tehipite Dome and Spanish Mtn over Labor Day. Ken McNutt and Gene Gail led 44 on a climb of Basin and Tom. They were joined by 3 climbers from the Mother Lode Chapter-SPS, Keating, Michael & Peckham.

Twenty Five Years Ago

In June the SPS moved its monthly meeting place from the clubhouse at Silver Lake Playground to the Lemon Grove Playground (where it remained until moved to the DWP auditorium) The June "SPS night" at Clifton's Cafeteria in central LA featured slides taken on SPS climbs taken in 1959. New members included Virgil Sisson and Walt Wheelock. Trip leaders included Keating with 53 on a Memorial Day climbs around Meysan Lakes, Tom Amneus with 55 to Siretta and Cherry Hill, Izzy Lieberman with 17 on Alta, Bill Sanders with 24 on Temple Crag and Gayley, Chuck Gerken to Sugarloaf and Sentinel Dome. --RON

??? Are you missing back issues of The Sierra Echo ???

A limited number of the following issues are available if you desire to replace issues missing from your collection. Please request, in writing, the issues you need and they will be mailed, as supplies last, with the next bulk mailing @ .10/issue. Send request to Ella Hoselton, Echo Mailer.

1980 Volume 24: No.1,2,3,4,6,7

1981 Volume 25: No.1,2,3,4,5,6,7

1982 Volume 26: No.1,2,3,7

1983 Volume 27: No.1,2,3,6,7

1984 Volume 28: No.2,3,4,5,6,7

1985 Volume 29: No.1

MT. IZAAK WALTON

28-29 July 1984

Pat and Gerry Holleman

Eight participants met at the boat landing in Vermillion Resort by the western tip of Lake Edison for a 9:00 a.m. boat departure to the other end of the lake (\$9.50 round trip). However, it was a close call for Delores Holladay and Alfred Beebe who caught the boat only because it was a few minutes late due to a dead battery. The 45 minute ride cuts off 6 miles of hiking.

When we arrived at the other end of the lake, Al discovered that he had left his sleeping bag somewhere. He decided to continue after generous offers of warm clothing were made for the night. A leisurely 4 mile backpack up the North Fork of Mono Creek put us in camp about a mile short of Mott Lake just after lunch. Gerry and Larry Hoak scouted the cliffs for a route to the peak and Terry Rivera hiked up to Mott Lake while Dick Akawie and the rest just enjoyed the warm afternoon. For the early happy hour, Don Weiss stirred up some of his famous guacamole while everyone else brought out his favorite goodies and vintage.

We left for the peak about 7:00 a.m. Sunday by ascending the rock slab ridge northwest of camp through a small draw southeast of bump 10671. From there the route is easy, open country to the peak. After enjoying the view particularly of Red Slate, we retraced the route back to camp in time for lunch.

A short backpack returned us to the boat landing about 2:30 p.m. where we carefully noted the number of people awaiting the 4:45 departure. As more and more hikers appeared, it became apparent that a problem would arise since the boat held only 16. When it arrived, more than 20 people with packs rushed on board and the pontoon boat went under water about 3 inches. Feeling that we had rights because of our early position in line, we stood our ground in the water. After the boat hands negotiated with angry hikers so that some were finally persuaded to wait for the next loading (1 1/2 hours later), we finally motored off across the lake. Al's sleeping bag had been found on top of the car and given to the Vermillion Cafe for safekeeping.

Gardiner, Deerhorn & West Vidette; Aug 4-6, 1984: Nancy Gordon & Fred Camphausen. Personal problems prevented both Nancy & Campy from leading their outing. When the group showed up, Norm Rohn & Dave Dykeman took over. The route from Charolette lake to Gardiner is the closest thing to a straight line easily navigated. Where the trail starts to descend more steeply we left it and steered a course for the peak. No difficult obstacles presented themselves on the way to the summit area. Once near the summit we headed right and up to reach the notch marking the start of the widely known ridge line. The rest of the climb was routine, with none of the climbers wishing a rope. We returned and spent the rest of day two moving base camp for Deerhorn & West Vidette: a flat spot above Vidette Creek about 500 vertical feet above Vidette Meadow.

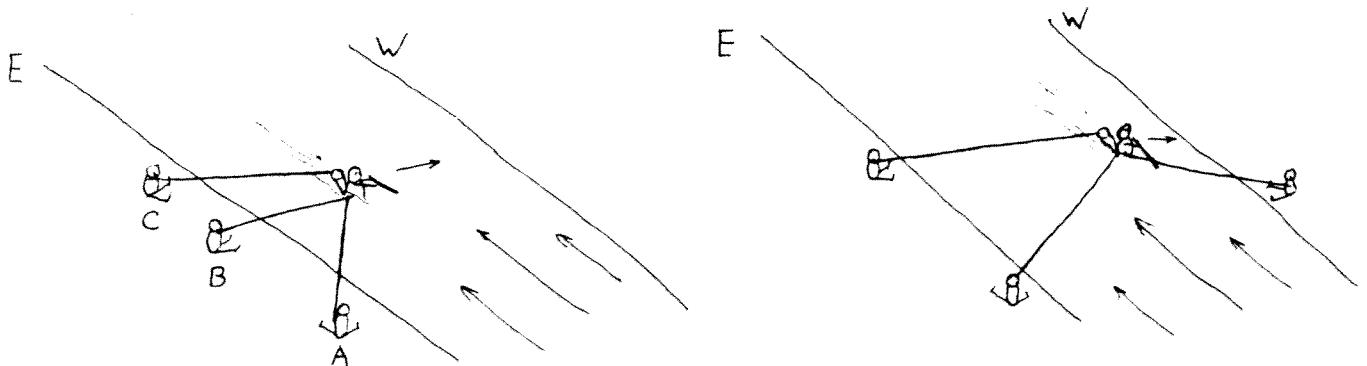
In the morning, we headed for Deerhorn. We managed to make a tough climb of the summit area. On the way down, we found that the right route leads from the notch north of the peak to the east & up. It's just over second class. Then, it was West Vidette. Roper's route to the summit from the south is technically easy, but seems to be endless near the end of the day. Our fourth day was the easiest: Just a walk back to Onion Valley. Gardiner was worth doing the third time. Dave D

Don Sparka, Lloyd Brown, Bill Bradley, Maria Valkass and I met Saturday morning at South Lake after driving Friday night through operation "Volcanic Ash", the Bishop area-Sierra Nevada war games of the Green Beret Special Forces, the National Guard and the ROTC. We backpacked over Bishop Pass, through the Duay Basin, into LeConte Canyon and down to Grouse Meadows, a distance of 16 1/2 miles but only about 2500 feet elevation gain. Here we met by plan, first with Norm Rohn, Jim Farkas and Igor Mamedalin who had been climbing for a few days and later with Vic Henney and Sue Wyman who had been climbing in the area since the Darwin climb a week before.

The next morning we looked over our crossing of the Middle Fork of the King's River. It was the fiercest river I've needed to cross in the Sierra. What is often easily wadeable or crossable on stones and downed logs was a 3 1/2 foot deep charging torrent. We spent more than an hour scouting up and down the river for an alternate crossing. Where the water was wider and calmer it was five and six feet deep and where it was narrower the river was dashing by over large boulders. We did find a large 4 foot diameter pine down over most the river but lacking 8 feet of roaring current of making it across and also had portions of it washed over the top by the river so we went back to the Grouse Meadow crossing which seemed to offer the best opportunity.

I tried going across belayed but the current was stronger than I could handle. Then Bill Bradley started strongly across the 40 feet of waist-deep and swift current and made the other side to establish another belay station on the west bank. We then crossed without incident except that it was time consuming and a very cold wait. Vic and Sue had planned to join us, and helped with our belays from the east side, but they were forced to pack out because of colds and viruses they had acquired.

We carried three ropes & set up our belayed stream crossing as shown:



Belayer A is up stream from the backpacker so that if the hiker loses footing he will pendulum downstream into the near bank. Belayer B is there to help A get the hiker in to the near bank quickly. The climber has loosened his backpack from his waist so that he can slip out of it easily if he falls so that he will not be held under or caught on a branch by his pack. Belayer C has a rope tied to the pack so that it can be retrieved if it was shed by the hiker. Once across Belayer D is established up stream to hold the hiker if he was to slip past the half way point in the stream and pendulum to the far bank. The hiker may carry a stout stick on the upstream side and lean heavily into it during the crossing.

Once across we warmed up a bit around a fire before proceeding down the west bank of the Kings River a half mile or so to about 8,250 feet where we proceeded up and over the shoulder of the ridge north of Rambaud Creek to the bench at 8800 ft and then traversed along the edge of the brush to the creek at about 10,000 ft. This route avoids a lot of brush at the mouth of the Ck. It began to sprinkle as we reached the second and largest of the Rambaud Lakes at 10,400 ft where we set up camp.

That afternoon we climbed Wheel Mtn avoiding most of the heavy snow in the 11,553 ft saddle between Wheel and Devil's Crag by ascending a series of partially snow-covered ramps leading to ridge to the east of the peak and then up the southeast summit ridge to the easy cl 3 summit area. We didn't linger as the weather was still drippy but descended directly to our camp.

Monday dawned clear and the eight of us started for Devil's Crag at 6:30. Our route was via the northwest arete and we followed a very helpful route description furnished by R. J. Secor. Climbing on hard snow covered slopes we proceeded toward the 11,553 ft saddle but turned south 500 ft below the saddle and cramponed up a steep prominent snow chute on the northwest arete (loose talus when the snow is gone). This is known as the "Henry cutoff", named during a climb made in 1971 by Wally Henry, a former SPS climber. Once on the ridge we climbed toward "White Top", a prominent peaklet on the arete. From the ridge below "White Top" we traversed along the southwest side of the ridge for 200-300 yards, losing about 100 feet to a 30 yard wide broad chute with light-colored, whiteish rock in the bottom. Much of the rock on this traverse is loose and hard hats should be worn on this and the remainder of the climb. We left our ice axes at this point. Once into the chute we climbed about 100 feet to the vertical headwall. Here at the right there is a buttress up which we climbed by a somewhat exposed cl 3 route. Some climbers used a rope here. A short distance beyond we were on the Northwest arete. Then it is 50 feet to a notch on the ridge, followed by a 40 ft cl 4 pitch (good anchor position for a belay, we left a rope here), then more cl 3 leading to a short awkward down climb into a smaller notch, a cl 4 climb out, then a 30-40 foot cl 4 knife edge with awesome exposure! We set a fixed line here for our descent. The rest of the climb was cl 3 to the summit. It was a real pleasure to climb with 8 climbers, all of whom were confident and had no hesitation on the rock.

Clouds had been building up again during the climb so we didn't stop long to look at the 50 year old register. Our descent was hurried as an electrical storm built up and the metal zippers on our day packs and jackets began to hum and our hair began to tingle and stand up. Three hundred feet below the peak we took cover under overhangs until the electrical activity slackened. We continued our careful descent down in light rain to arrive at our camp about 6 where we packed and hiked until about 8 when we reached the Kern River. Here we set up a new camp in the continuing rain.

The next morning I led the stream crossing where we had crossed earlier but the river had risen at least a foot up to

chest level and I couldn't handle the current. Maris tried next and it was comical to watch him forge the stream with his pack, the water getting deeper and deeper until he started bobbing and floating away with the current. We retrieved him and spent an hour looking for alternate crossings before returning to the large downed tree I mentioned earlier. Even more water was running over it than before. Jim Hinkley donned his crampons and with ice axe made his way to the far end of the tree where the roots were. We strung a fixed line. Jim made a mighty 8 foot belayed leap and got across to the far bank where he set up an overhead pulley traverse to ferry our packs over. Finally everyone was across and we were starting the 3,800 foot soggy climb to Bishop Pass.

Passing the LeConte Ranger Station we met Ranger Judy Zucker who a week before arranged for the rescue of Richard Williams who had been lost for 17 days in the Sierra and was eating pine nuts, flower petals and ants by the end of that time. It rained heavily on us as we passed through the Dusay Basin and one of our climbers had enough and made camp there to wait for a dry tomorrow while the rest of us sloged out with wet heavy packs to complete another 16 1/2 mile day to our cars by 7:30.

Then to top the weekend events we learned that during operation "Volcanic Ash" some of the troops Saturday night tear-gassed the guests at Parcher's Camp.

Thanks to all the skilful strong climbers who made the trip a success, perhaps the best group I've climbed with in the SPS, to R. J. for his route help and especially to Maris for his usual fine assist. --RON

IRON MTN. GOURMET BACKPACK Sep 15-16, 1984 Toby & Dykeman

The vehicle restriction and the bus to the Devils Postpile National Monument were over for the year but getting a permit was not so easy. I sent in the usual application in March to the Mammoth Ranger Station. They sent back a questionnaire for a "Outfitter Guide Permit" listing the various conditions to meet and the fees charged. I filled it out and returned it stating this was a Sierra Club trip with no paid personnel and no fees of any kind for the participants. In time I received the usual permit reservation without any comment.

Starting at the Devils Postpile Campground we hiked first on the Muir then on the Beck Lakes Trail for several miles over a wooded hillside. At a broken down log cabin the Beck Trail heads North. We continued West to a picturesque campsite near a stream coming from Ashley Lake. It was happy hour all afternoon and we continued on with a super gourmet dinner. Everyone shared their delicacies. We had enough food and vino for a small army. Terry Rivera brought some delicious Swedish meat balls.

Sunday; it was a wonder we got up at all, much less be able to climb. But climb we did- up a long snow chute that came down from the ridge almost to Ashley Lake. Ice axes were a must and two of us used crampons. The chute was icy in spots. The top of the chute was very steep and did require crampons, so nearly everyone took to the rocks on the right hand side of the chute. From the ridge it was a walkup to the summit. Although not a giant of the Sierras, Iron mountain commands very good views, especially to the West. After an easy hike out, including a rain shower, we re-grouped in Mammoth for an early dinner to fortify us for the drive home. It was a pleasure to have Lynna Walker and Walt Mill from Bishop on the trip.

George

Our goal was to climb some of Ecuador's peaks and see some culture and scenery. Since the country lies right on the equator, the snow line is at about 16,000 feet, and 18,000'+ summits can be climbed without great difficulty.

During my first three weeks I attempted a few peaks but was successful only on Tungurahua (5000m), an enjoyable peak rising 3000m right up from the town of Banos. My companion Bob Landry made it up Illiniza Norte (5000m), and nearly Cotopaxi, but returned home early with a case of severe snowblindness. A theft of our climbing equipment and an intestinal upset were problems too. With Jim Watts, whom we arranged to meet down there, we backpacked up to the El Altar volcano, and took in the most spectacular scenery of the trip. All the major summits in Ecuador are volcanoes, and a few are still active today. Altar is an extinct one--blown out on one side, so that you may walk right up into the crater, and see massive icewalls and 2-5000 foot high rock walls above. We did not try the 50 degree ice and 5th class rock necessary for the easiest route on the easiest summit there.

I did a warm-up hike up Pinchicha (4700m), which can be likened to Mt Wilson (LA); a 2000m gain up on the outskirts of Quito. The next week I spent at Cotopaxi, at 5900m the country's second highest. Of three attempts, I made the summit twice. It was quite enjoyable climbing with some friendly Columbians and Ecuadorians; then I met Mary Gygax, Donn Cook, and Chris Yager at the refuge. Our climb took 7 1/2 hours from the refuge, which is at 4800m. The weather was a bit severe, unfortunately,--a stiff wind with wet snow blowing into our faces most of the time. Four ice-encrusted SPsers cheered on the summit in the 40mph gale. Next, a steak dinner, first class hotel, and jungle drive provided a brief respite from the stark glacial terrain.

As we drove toward Chimborazo in our rented car we could appreciate the bulk of this immense mound of white. The Whympner refuge, spacious and well-built, is at 4900 meters, an hours walk from the carpark. The peak, at 6310m (20,700'), stands a challenge by virtue of its altitude if nothing else. The second night at the refuge we awoke at 11:30pm, and a South American style New Year's celebration put us in the right frame of mind for our departure ten minutes into 1985. The ascent was more technical than that of Cotopaxi, which had about a dozen crevasse or serac areas along the route. This time we belayed up a 30-40 degree canaletta (ice gulley), after gaining 300 meters along a ridge. Then it was another 300m up slopes of increasing steepness, and a long traverse up under ice cliffs on 30 degree ice and snow. Then another 500 meters or so of exhausting high-altitude plodding to the false summit. It was then about a kilometer across a slight saddle to the top. It was my altitude record and I felt tired, but good! The weather was pretty reasonable--breezy, the usual afternoon clouds, but no snow. The temperature got down to 19deg F; I had to stop quite a while to warm my feet which were becoming numb (boots too tight). All four made the summit. We were back to the hut in mid-afternoon. Then, the rest of the trip was a jungle trip for me, and sightseeing for Don, Chris, and Mary.

XX

PRIVATE TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT

Mt. Whitney area cleanout, 17 peaks, do all or none, July 13th through 21st. Private trip, Dale Van Dalsem & friends (213) 822-9668.

XX

DRAGON TOOTH AND NORTH EAST BUTTRESS OF NORTH COTTER
June 22, 1984 Dick Beach

Readers please note: The routes and descriptions in this trip writeup are offered as an update. Although this is rather lengthy, it is due to the fact that no information was available. This material is offered as a reference for the "Dragon Tooth", and as a supplement to the new routes on the North Summit of Mt. Cotter.

For anyone who has approached Dragon Col above Golden Trout Lakes, the view of a large square top "tooth" is impressive. Without finding any reference to the "Dragon Tooth" in any of my guide books, I am left with this name which was indicated in the first ascent by Parker Stevensen in the register, July 26, 1946.

Long-time climbing friend, Steve Rogero, joined me on a plan to put a new route up the North Summit of Mt. Cotter. After reaching Dragon Col at 10 a.m. and having all gear and no wind, we proceeded directly up the face from the col. I figure this route to be 5.4-5.6 with one 15 foot crack of direct aid. Needed for this climb would be 5-6 angles, hammer and several slings, plus a set of stirrups, assorted small nuts, and a rope of 150 ft. length.

After one pitch, you are confronted with a vertical aid crack--this apparently stops the tourists. Our ascent was the only one since the first. Good belay spots accompany the climb to the summit. The route leaves the east face ridge and goes through a very noticeable notch to the north face via a large flake with a narrow walkway, which is then descended. An anchor pin belay was placed and would be used for second of the three rappels needed to come off. Once on the north side, the first ascent route goes straight up a 5.0 crack. One will see an old ring pin, above this is another aid crack of 10 feet. I said "no thanks". Looking farther over on the north face you will see another set of cracks that will take you directly to the summit--third pitch. Although summit glass jar is not on high rock of summit, you won't mind another 10 minutes which will put one on the high rock of the "Dragon Tooth". How rare to find a peak of this kind that has not been climbed in over forty years with a view all the more incredible.

Our descent was made easy with old free-style 75 ft. rappels. Back at col at 3:30. At this point we had taken more time than expected due to deadend routes and finding. I would figure 3 hours would do nicely now.

Our destination that day was still Sixty Lake Basin Saddle next to Fin Dome. At 8 p.m. we arrived at camp and were greeted with the magnificent silhouette of the north east arete of No. Cotter on the sky line. Here we would still see the direction of our approach.

The North Summit of Cotter is in fact an incredible sleeper among Sierra Peaks. Shadowed by the magnificent Mt. Clarence King and completing the circle with Fin Dome, South Cotter and Mt. Gardiner, North Cotter is obscured! I found the "Climber's Guide" is of little help. It indicates that David Brower in 1940 during a Sierra Club trip traversed from South Peak to North Peak. "Well folks, good luck!"--and if that is 4th class, I'll eat it. And not just one section, his route is high, time consuming--5th class plus. I believe this is why anyone looking over from south summit to north says "no thanks". The traverse is high exposure and much more than a mere 20 feet 4th class wall to encounter. "This is highly underrated David!"

What is left are two very nice routes--the north ridge couloir and the north east buttress. I could see no easy routes on the east and west faces.

At 5 p.m. we are on our way to the north east buttress. Once again, images of the Matterhorn, a term not used lightly and more geographically, The Swiss Arete on Mt. Sill, is very much what you are approaching. Our weather was perfect for both climbs. It would be easy to say "forget it", as you climb closer to the steep point of the arete. The ridge goes straight up, high angle. As we came closer we kept looking over to South Cotter at the easy approach and trying to see if our route did not go, could we still try the only known route via Brower's description. Basically, once you head over to the buttress, you are committed to either the N.E. buttress or north ridge.

The ridge starts with the problem of how one figures out how to get through the Sixty Lake Basin maze. Once at the ridge, I suggest staying on the north side where a series of nice ledges that lead diagonally upward--class 2-3, or follow into east face bowl of North Cotter, an impressive Cirque Valley. Looking at lower north buttress ridge, one will see a noticeable break with talus slope leading to notch, then onto the ridge. Proceed up to notch and take eastern gully to crest. This will look like a "no go", but the closer you get, one sees an incredible snake gully for 30 ft. to the top. Both sides arrive at this spot; then continue to the ridge proper.

At this point one is 2/3 of the way to the base of the buttress. Follow diagonally to the top of the ridge and stay high. I rate this route at high 4 with 5 class exposure. Like the Swiss Arete, both routes offer incredible handholds--practically Cathedral Peak type granite. The entire buttress includes 5 full pitches--150 ft. Here leads without protection were not out of line due to incredible foot and handholds throughout all the rope lengths. The route goes directly up favoring the north side. No hardware is necessary, only a few slings for belay protection and rappels.

To our surprise, this summit has only been climbed three times. This includes the first ascent. Numbers two and three were via the north ridge via traverses from Clarence King in 1968 and 1975. After a beautiful view and doublechecking Brower's traverse, it is definitely my choice that this north ridge is the easiest route to No. Cotter. We chose to descend this route which would save many rappels. This descent is easy 4th class to 1st prominent spire on the north ridge--one pitch. One ends up on a large granite platform above a large notch. I found it easier not to rappel into notch but just south of it. This descent requires only two rappels of 75 ft. The second rappel goes across the notch gully lower down to some 3rd class ledges, these ledges are followed down and over to the base of the N.E. buttress where my route began with rope.

Total time was four hours to top from Sixty Lake col and two hours to come off and back. The catch for us was we arrived at camp at 3 p.m., had to pick up packs and like old SPS marches of the past, our exit headed out over Glen and Kearsarge. This bye-bye put us on Glen at 5:30 and Kearsarge at 10 p.m. and cars at 11:30.

Hopefully, dates and times will update Climber's Guide materials and to also offer a very enjoyable climb. This new and exciting route in the Sierras is rare, for few new routes are found these days on well-established peaks. This was my twenty-year dream to spend time

on North Cotter. And now for anyone who wills to go for it, you will find it an incredible peak not to be silent about.

MT. WILLIAMSON

July 6-8, 1984

Raiford/Wankum

Driving up to Symmes Creek trailhead Thursday, we witnessed threatening clouds over the mountains, and indeed one participant reported experiencing a thunderstorm above Onion Valley. However, Friday morning skies provided a few clouds for shade as all ten participants started up the trail at 7:11 a.m. A little shifting of a nearby log Thursday night provided a dry first crossing, second and third crossings bypassed by use trail. Fourth crossing waded in sneakers. For "minimum maintenance", the trail is very good all the way to Shepherd Pass, although steep the last 400 feet up to first saddle. Lunch in shade at Mahogany Flat, then on to Anvil Camp at 3:11 p.m. - 8 hours up, from trailhead. Several flat spots, trees for protection, and convenient water make an excellent campsite. Good weather holding - too warm Friday nite for down sleeping bag. Up Saturday morning and on the trail by 5:44 a.m. Logs provided dry crossing of Shepherd Creek. Past the Pothole (What campsites?) to Shepherd Pass at 7:24 a.m. Fair amount of snow last 350 feet up to pass - could mostly be circumvented. To chagrin of nine participants, we follow Winnett's suggestion to go around north side of lake at pass - a mutinous crowd demanded the south side on return trip. Up and down next few hours to base of mountain. Stopped at lake directly below Tyndall to fill water bottles. For "one of the most remote areas in the Sierra", we saw a lot of people. From a point just southeast of the lake north of Lake Helen of Troy we spotted the famous black water stain caused by water creeping over the rocky steps about 300-400 feet up the mountain. We memorized the chutes we could see from below, then climbed to the right of the stain and behold! - a wide chute leading to the left that we didn't see before. Climbing here must be cautious to avoid dislodging rock onto those below. A long ascent, sure enough, leads to a "window notch" at top and about 100 feet to right is the "75 foot chute of class three rock". No problem up this. Once up, a ten minute boulder hop to the right over a small false summit leads to the actual summit. Arrival time - 1:03 p.m. = 7 1/3 hours up. All of the eight participants who left camp made the summit. A little altitude sickness with one participant slowed the group a tad, but all were back at camp by 8:24 p.m. Weather was perfect all day Saturday (maybe three little clouds) and little wind. Left camp Sunday at 8:11 a.m. and back to cars by 12:25 p.m. - also in perfect weather.

1985 UNIMPAIRED SNOWMELT RUNOFF FORECASTS

These figures are the water runoff forecasts in percent of normal, based on a 50 year average. They do not necessarily represent the amount of snow on the ground.

Tuolumne, 79%; Merced, 81%; San Joaquin, 80%; Kings, 82%; Kaweah, 85%; Kern, 77%; Owens, 97%; Mono, 84%. The Owens basin breaks down as follows: Long Valley, 88%; Long Valley to Tinemaha, 100%; Tinemaha to Haiwee, 97%.

R.J. Secor

The Sierra ECHO is published seven times a year by the Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club.

COPY: Send to Editor, Pat Holleman, 1638 6th St., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266. ECHO deadlines are the 20th of the odd numbered months and June. Priority is given to TYPED, SINGLE SPACED copy.

ADDRESS CHANGES TO: Secretary, Ron Hudson, 18156 Strathern St., Reseda, CA 91335. Third class mail is not forwarded.

INQUIRIES ABOUT NOT RECEIVING THE ECHO: Direct to Mailer, Ella Hoselton, 5831 W. 76th St., Los Angeles, CA 90045.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are \$4.00 per year due by March 31. Subscribing to the ECHO is a requirement for active membership in the SPS. Send new subscriptions to the Secretary (address above) and include your Sierra Club membership number. Send renewals to the Treasurer (address below). New applications received after October 1 are credited through the next year.

FAMILY SUBSCRIPTIONS: Only one ECHO subscription is necessary for members of a family residing at one address.

AWARDS: Emblem pins (\$7.50) and patches (\$2.00) are available from the Treasurer, Vieve Weldon, 12203-47 Santa Gertrudes Ave., La Mirada, CA 90638.

SIERRA CLUB, ANGELES CHAPTER
SIERRA PEAKS SECTION
5831 W. 76th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90045
"To explore, enjoy, preserve"

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
permit no. 36438
Los Angeles, CA