

# The Sierra



# ECHO

VOLUME 30

AUGUST

1986

NO. 5



"Think naught a trifle, though it small appear;  
Small sands the mountain, moments make the year."

Edward Young

The old days before the need to secure wilderness permits and before the impositions of participant limits are indeed Paradise Lost.

Each busy Sierra climbing season since the inception of the above restrictions has engendered an increasing problem with no-shows. Some sections have tried to solve the problem by charging a refundable registration fee. Some individuals have suggested compiling a list of no-show offenders. The SPS has found neither of these ideas acceptable.

Some individual leaders have had some success with making adamant statements concerning cancellations when they send out the trip sheet. Some leaders have ameliorated the problem by sending out their trip sheets well in advance so that disappointed applicants have time to make other arrangements. Responsible members have become careful about not making multiple trip applications and by using common courtesy in notifying a leader in case cancellation becomes necessary.

If you have additional ideas concerning this problem, please get in touch with any management committee member before the August Meeting.

Enjoy the mountains,

*Mary Sue*

#### PRIVATE TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT

Run the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon from June 13-24, 1987. Experience the best rapids in North America, as well as hiking, swimming, and camp in the oldest exposed rocks in the world. For more info call/write David Vandervoet, 213-596-9344, 3172 Shakespeare, Los Alamitos, 90720.

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#### VOLUME 30-5 PEAK INDEX (1986)

Aconcagua	Morgan #1	Silver
Colosseum	Moses	Siretta
Deer	Muir	Taylor
Joshua Tree	Perkins	Trinity Alps
Lamont	Olancha	Whitney
Maggie	Sawtooth #1	

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COVER PHOTO: Dave Vandervoet took this picture of Half Dome from the top of the Porcelain Wall for the August issue of the ECHO. Thank you for sharing it, Dave!

## ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Ron Jones

### Five Years Ago in the SPS

There were three new Senior Emblems earned by SPSers during August 1981; George Toby, Mary McMannes and Al Benson became Senior Emblem holders # 67-69. New SPS Emblem holders this month were Steve Powell, Theresa Rutherford, and Nancy Gordon, # 416-418. Al Owens became a Section member. Jackie VanDalsem and Art Blauvelt led a group of 25 on climbs of Independence and University. Mary McMannes earned her Sr Emblem on the trip to Clark and Starr King led by Dave Perkins. Bob Hartunian led a climb of Mt Humphries with 12 & Dave Vandervoet led a group of 5 on a Northern Yosemite area climb with Piute, Pettit, Volunteer, Whorl, Twin, Virginia and Matterhorn climbed by various members. Dale Vandalsem led a private ice and rock climb of Sill. Jackie beat him by an hour on the conventional route.

### Ten years Ago

Ed Treacy beat his brother Tim as an SPS list finisher by several years when he became the eighth to finish in August 1976. Rich Gnagy and Frank Risley earned Senior Emblems # 19 and 20. New members included Tony Contreras, Bill Faulkner, Bill Gray, John Klinepeter, Jane McMahon, Sam Roberts and Don Sparks. Duane McRuer and Bill T led 15 on a climb of McAdie, Irvine and Muir and John Backus climbed the last of the West Coast 14,000ers on the trip. Walt Kabler and Phil Bruce tried Mts Abbot & Mills but had to retreat in snow and bad weather, Walt & Gene Olsen led 21 on Lyell and Maclure. Diana Dee and Sy Ossofsky led Mt Tom. Jerry Keating and Gordon MacLeod led 6 to Graveyard Pk in the Silver Divide. Ted Pinson and John Hellman led 17 to Mts Wallace and Haeckel and Meridee Muell and Dennis Lantz led 15 to Mt Williamson and Junction.

### Twenty Years Ago

There were no new emblem holders in July 1966 and the Echo did not list new members at that time. The 1966 Management Committee under the leadership of Section Chairman Dick Jali decided to update the peaks list and select a list of "star" or "golden" peaks (which later developed into the present Mountaineer's list). The guiding idea was to make this new list a useful guide to climbing so that those "entering an unfamiliar region would have some idea what peaks of all those on the maps are really the most desirable". This provision was to be voted upon at the upcoming Section election. All climbers in the Section, who at the time had climbed 150 or more peaks, were asked to list their 100 best peaks based on dominance, beauty of approach, view from the top, elevation, inaccessibility and difficulty. Also 25 "Star" peaks were to be selected which were to be regarded as above average. Climbing highlights of the time included Arkel Erb leading the first scheduled SPS 4th class climbing trip in which 6 persons climbed various of the Kearsarge Pinnacles. Ken McNutt led another 4th class climbing party on Clyde Minaret. Jerry Keating led a group of 18 on the first scheduled climb of Mt Henry. Ed Lane reported on a solo climb, the 2nd ascent of the newly named Mt Adali Stevenson (12,760+', 0.5 miles SE of Gardiner).

### Thirty Years Ago

Trips led by the fledgeling SPS in August 1956, near the end of their first summer, included a lead of University Pk by Chuck Miller. The first scheduled trip to Mt Darwin was led by Bob Sheller and Leo Scotti. Frank Bressell led Mt Irvine on the last weekend of the month. --RON

Again I ask that any corrections or further additions to my information on the early SPS history (I've not gotten any at this point) be sent to Ron Jones, 13 Meadowsweet Way, Irvine 92715.

NORTH EAST BUTTRESS MT. MUIR AND WHITNEY  
SEPTEMBER 1, 1985

DICK BEACH

As anyone who has endured a one-day climb of Mt. Whitney knows, the possibility of doing that fine peak via the North East Arete of Mt. Muir in one day can be done.

From Trail Camp, a very direct route leads up the 2000' face of the Whitney escarpment that is high angle and well-fractured. At a lovely 3:00 a.m. plus a one hour drive from Bishop, I met climbing friend, Bob Good, at Whitney Portal under a full moon. After 4 hours we were greeted by sunrise at Trail Camp. For the anticipated long day ahead, a slow steady pace does the trick.

We brought the rope and hardware! "You don't!" Route is classic open book. The North East Buttress in Climbers Guide is class 4 with "rapid climbing". I would only add a touch of 5th on 2 or 3 moves where much exposure is encountered, the rest is a grand climb with grand views!

On top of Muir by 10:00 - our day was incredibly clear - we wore shorts, half way up we took our shirts off due to the heat. Thank goodness most of the route favors the north side. I bring a 400mm just so we know what the rest of the world is doing. The options are almost too numerous for picture taking.

After another 45 minutes, we found ourselves on Mt. Whitney surrounded by some 80 people. An interesting note about the Mt. Whitney bunch which frequents the summit on the big Labor Day push is nobody wears boots anymore! Even to the point of people asking "why do you wear boots up here?" My, my, what have our Sierra trails turned into? My response was simple - we will be history around here while you are still descending. (Those fools were already beginning to hobble on the summit.)

The end of summer weekend was truly climaxed by the beautiful day on Whitney's summit. Even a kite flyer for entertainment. An hour and a half puts one back at Trail Camp. Seeing that we were ahead of our schedule, we took a pleasant pace back to the cars at 7:00 p.m. The following day we found out it snowed on Whitney only to make us realize what a great day we had.

Mt. Muir is a rapid moving ridge. Although we did not require a rope or gear, there are some exposed moves and a majority of extra time was spent checking rocks -- still "a very nice route"!

??? 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. [First class mail is .39/issue] Send request to Ella Hoselton, Echo Mailer 5831 W. 76th St. L.A., CA 90045.

1980 Volume 24:	No.6-	,7-			
1981 Volume 25:	No.2-	,3-	,4-	,5-	,6-
1982 Volume 26:	No.3-	,7-			
1983 Volume 27:	No.1-	,3-	,6-		
1984 Volume 28:	No.3-	,4-	,5-	,6-	,7-
1985 Volume 29:	No.3-	,4-	,5-	,6-	
1986 Volume 30:	No.3-				

## SILVER PEAK

14-15 September 1985

Pat and Gerry Holleman

A snowstorm during the week before the trip made us somewhat apprehensive about driving over Kaiser Pass and taking the risk of stranding our cars for the winter. Since the Forest Service verified that the pass had been opened, however, it seemed pretty early in the season for a total closure. They also reported that there was still a foot of snow at 10,000'.

The long drive to Lake Edison caused some early morning arrivals at the roadhead. Dan Domancich and Scott Woock arrived at 5:30 a.m., just about raring to go. The sky was bright and sunny, a sparkling fall day in the Sierra, which alleviated most of our anxiety about snowstorms.

Since the roadhead was rather indistinct with no obvious trailhead signs, we drove as far as possible on the road. With just the leisurely backpack to Devil's Bathtub planned for the day (7 miles and 1400'), all 9 participants finally got together in the parking area and left the cars at 9:00 a.m. We started up an old logging road that the Forest Service is in the process of blocking to vehicular access. At a bend in the road, a little exploring uncovered a trail that took us to Twin Meadows. We crossed the mushy east end of the meadows, maintaining a northeasterly bearing until we picked up the trail again.

Arriving at the north end of Devil's Bathtub at 11:45 a.m. with no snow in sight, we settled in for some serious napping after lunch. Scott Woock fished but came back empty handed. The area is a lovely place just to sit and soak in the scenery. Happy hour started at 4:00 p.m. As usual, Jim Murphy had carried in 4 liters of wine and thoroughly impressed the non-SPSers with his dedication. Mario Gonzales brought a liter, and various others brought 151, Jack Daniels and apricot brandy. Mary Sue Miller contributed taboule and some delicious smoked salmon. Additional goodies from Gerry Dunie and Suzanne Swedo made it quite a party.

On Sunday, we left at 6:30 a.m. for the peak by going from camp over an 11,200' ridge. The route has been nicely described by Norm Rohn in his Jan-Feb 1986 ECHO writeup. Some snow from the recent storm remained on the north side of the ridge. On the summit by 11:00 a.m., we enjoyed the view of the Sierra from a new perspective while the weather stayed clear but chilly. Back at camp at 2:00 pm., we left at 2:30 and found that the use trail on the west side of the lake was an improvement over the trail on the east side. We arrived at the cars by 4:30 for the long drive home.

FALL IN FOR THE END OF SUMMER (OR MEET THE SPS) OCT 12/13, 1985  
Dave Dykeman, Don Borad, Sherrie Harsh and Eivor Nilsson

We were to meet at Big Meadow at 7 A.M. I vow never to go to Big Meadow again. Twice before someone separated from the group. Now, the leader was lost. Actually, my car had fuel problems and I never showed up till 2 p.m. Aside from that, it was a lovely weekend. Right. Mrs L? (My dead car's a Lincoln too). Ten new (to the SPS) people took in the weekend. Over-all, the reactions were positive. We have seen two of the climbers at subsequent SPS meetings. Saturday morning, the group Taylor Dome and did Sirretta Pk. in the pm. We spent the evening around around a campfire. Sunday we split into two groups. One did Lamont while those wanting something more strenuous did Sawtooth #1. We were back early & enjoyed dinner at Los Tres Hermanos in Mojave.

The two of us left LAX via Aerolineas Argentinas at 11:30 AM on January 19th and arrived in Mendoza, Argentina at 12:30PM (Argentina time) on the 20th.

The main thing to be done in Mendoza is to get a climbing permit. The permit is issued by "La Direccion De Deportes Recreacion y Turismo Social" located at the soccer stadium in General San Martin Park.

Aconcagua is one of the few peaks in South America for which a permit is required. We had read and been told that the prerequisites for the permit were: climbing resumes for each member of the party, a list of all personal and team equipment, a recent EKG printout, blood type of each climber, a personal physicians statement, four passport type photos, a detailed ascent plan, personal biographical data and the execution of a liability release form.

We came prepared to provide all of that, but the only thing needed was the statement from a doctor saying that we were in good health and could climb to high elevations. We also signed the liability release form.

Also contrary to what we had read and heard the border patrol at Punta de Vacas did nothing but record our names, passport numbers and expected return date in its log and keep one copy of our permit.

While we were in Mendoza we visited the Mendoza climbing club (Club Andinista Mendoza) which is located at the end of Pasaje Lemos and just north of Pardo Tel: 24-1840. We met some interesting people there and got some helpful route information.

In Mendoza we stayed at the Nutibara Hotel, Avenida Mitre 867, Tel: 24-4658 where they seem accustomed to having climbers as guests. Its not a luxurious place but has good amenities and reasonable rates.

On January 22nd we went by bus to Punta de Vacas where we checked in with the border patrol, got accommodations for the night at the local hosteria and made arrangements for a mule and two gauchos to carry our supplies and equipment to base camp. The mule service cost \$250 for that two-day trip.

We started hiking on the 23rd and reached base camp early afternoon of the 24th. It is about thirty miles to base camp with about 6000 feet of gain. We went eighteen miles the first day up the Rio de Vacas to the confluence of the Relinchos and then twelve miles the next day up the Relinchos to base camp. A nearby sign says the elevation there is 4300 meters (14107 feet).

Hiking from base camp to the Polish Glacier is on use trails over great mounds of sterile glacial till. There is no life on these morains--no plants, no lichens, no mice, no insects, no worms, no pest of any kind--nothing. At base camp and along the trail a melting glacier can be seen in several places under the piles of till. Aconcagua's ancient ice had flowed many miles to this dry barren place.

Our camp 1 and the last running water was at about 16600 feet. It is just above a field of nieve penitentes which seem to sprout up through the

till. They are hard to walk through. We carried a load to camp 1 then returned to base camp to sleep. We broke camp the next day and moved up to camp 1.

Our camp 2 was at about 18700 feet in an exposed and windy but scenic crows- nest like place. A better more sheltered place for camp 2 is farther up at 19300 feet, but it was occupied.

Our camp 3 was at 20100 feet on the rocks to the right of the Polish glacier. Using our procedure of carrying high then sleeping low, and moving camp the next day, it took us six days to get from base camp to camp 3.

We had two false start days, January 31st and February 1st. We climbed the peak on February 2nd. We ascended the rocks to the right of the glacier for several hundred feet so that when we got onto the glacier we were above the nieve penitentes. We then ascended the glacier to a point where we could go across it under the seracs and above some hard shiny ice and nieve penitentes below. We crossed to a point above the prominent banded rock, a landmark known locally as the piedra bandera, and from there up to the summit ridge. The ascent of the glacier is not technically difficult. The steepest parts are about forty degrees, and neither of us felt the need to rope up. We did take advantage of a fixed rope put in by a mountaineering class, but it was not needed.

From the summit ridge we had an excellent view of the daunting vertical ice and rock of Aconcagua's south face. We also looked out on the top of the Andes and several nearby glacier-covered 22000-foot peaks. Thousands of feet below we could see a debris-covered glacier flowing through the dry terrain several miles from the mountain.

There are many false summits along the summit ridge and at one of those crests we had a grim reminder that this mountain can be fatally dangerous. We found the body of a Japanese climber in a bivouac tent. Because of the blood around his nose and mouth we believed that he had died of pulmonary edema. We read later that it may have been from dehydration.

As we were nearing the summit we were invited for coffee by Fernando Garrido a mountaineer from Spain who was living on the summit to set a record for living at high altitude. He planned to stay there until February 17th. He hopes to get his name in the Guinness Book of Records and plans to write a book about his experiences on the summit. Fernando's safe return to civilization was reported by the L A Times on February 24th.

When we arrived at the summit I set my altimeter to 22834 feet. Since we got there late we did not want to return via the glacier so we descended by way of the big scree slope on the "normal" route to a point where we could traverse around the mountain to our camp. We had to bivouac at the Independencia Hut at 21000 feet. The hut has half a roof and a large hole in one end for a door. The wind came right in. I don't think I slept that night and I shivered most of the time.

Dawn finally came. We got back to our camp early the next morning tired and dehydrated. Later that day we descended to the 19300-foot

Aconcagua (Continued)

camp where we had cached our food. We drank lots of cocoa, soup, ERG and lemonade and got some much needed of rest.

On the 4th we returned to base camp and on the 5th arranged for mules to carry our equipment back to Punta de Vacas. We arrived at Punta de Vacas on the 6th.

On the 7th we did some sightseeing near the Argentina-Chile border where we visited several interesting places including a cemetery for Andes climbers. Several American climbers are buried there.

Later we took the bus back to Mendoza where we spent a few more days relaxing and being tourists. We landed back in Los Angeles on Tuesday February 11th.

The climb of Aconcagua via the Polish Glacier is not technically difficult, but can be dangerous because of the high altitude and cold weather. Because of the altitude the climb should be characterized as very hard hiking.

The elevations noted here are from altimeter readings taken on the way down. I think they are pretty accurate because the reading at base camp was within 150 feet of the posted 4300 meters and the reading at Punta de Vacas was very close to the 2395 meters posted there.

## **HDL Climbs Along With Mountaineers**

HDL is a blood component that scientists feel reduces chances of heart disease. Recently 13 male mountaineers nearly doubled theirs just three weeks into an eight-week climb.

Scientists from the Baker Medical Research Institute on Melbourne, Australia, measured HDL levels in mountaineers before, during and after a strenuous ascent of Mt. Dunagiri in the Himalayas. And in just 21 days, HDL levels had risen an average of 92 percent in all of them.

The researchers think it was the exercise. But they also credit the "conditions," not the least of which was the excitement, which the scientists termed "stress."

The study, in the researchers' words, proved two things: first, the "HDL concentrations rise rapidly with strenuous exercise." And second, that "extraordinarily high HDL concentrations can be achieved."

We interpret this to mean that adventuring can be good for your heart, because it involves exercise and a kind of resolvable "stress" that (in the sporting world) goes by the name *challenge*.

Keep that in mind as you recreate this year, not just on your vacation, but all year round.

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Jim Floyd  
Dan Grutzmacher  
Robert Hoeven  
Bruce Orenstein  
Wayne Wurzburger

### **NEW EMBLEM HOLDERS**

Rick Chval  
Greg Gerlach

### **NEW ECHO SUBSCRIBER**

Mary Ann Morpmoto



After threatening weather and cloudy skies Friday night, twenty four of us met at 7am Saturday morning in the town of Joshua Tree. We caravanned to Sheep Pass and the participants divided into three groups: beginning and intermediate students and rock checkoff for Leadership Training. This year was our smallest turnout in many years, partly weather and partly Club insurance restrictions, and because of the later this was the first year we were restricted to instructing on third class and easier rock. Saturday we had a good practice session until 3 pm when it began to drizzle. Most of the group retired into two vans and tried to fight off boredom. Can you believe 13 people in a VW van?

Sunday morning at 3:30 I woke all those interested in seeing Halley's Comet. Nine of us hiked to the top of nearby Ryan Mtn where we had a perfect and unobstructed view of the comet. All agreed that it was worth the effort. Later that day Cuno led a private group who had checked out of the trip in a private session of climbing, Bill Bradley led 6 or 7 on a climb of Queen Mtn and I led a hike to an abandoned homestead in JTree. During the late 1920s a miner lived here and during his stay he hammered out 8 long petroglyph messages on nearby rocks. One reads in part:

STUDY NATURE OBEY THE LAWS  
OF IT YOU CANT GO WRONG  
IT PAYES COMPOUND INTEREST  
FOR LIFE AND NOT ONE PENNY  
ENVESTED.

My thanks to Bill Bradley, Dave Dykeman, Nancy Gordon, Cuno Ranschau and Norm Rohn for working as instructors. --Ron Jones

Mt. Morgan #1 (13,748) 19-20 April

Gary Guenther/ Nancy Gordon

Eleven of us met at 7:30 A.M. at the Rock Ck. trail head. The road is kept plowed all winter to an elevation of 8,900 ft. were a sno-park permit is required from 1 Nov. to 30 May to park an auto. The fee is \$2.00 a day or \$10.00 a season. Bishop Ck. also requires a sno-park permit. At 8:00 A.M. we proceeded up the snow covered road about 2 miles to Rock Creek Winter Lodge. From there we traveled cross country to Francis Lake arriving about noon. Hirsh Kolp and Graham Breakwell decided to climb the peak that afternoon and signed out. They were sucessful returning about 6:30 that evening. Debby Main and myself, the only skiers on the trip, skied part way up the peak that afternoon finding breakable crust and some fair snow. A few others were able to chop a couple of feet thru the ice on the lake so no one had to melt snow for water. We all awoke at 5:00 A.M. and were on the go shortly after 6:00 A.M. Some wore crampons but they were not necessary. The top was reched in about 3 hours were 45 min. were spent enjoying the view and excellent weather. We broke camp by 12:30 and arrived at the trail head about 3:00 P.M. Everyone wore snow shoes out, except the skiers, and were not much faster than if they hadn't. The skiing from camp down was excellent until I hit the meadow by Rock Ck Lodgd with enough speed to cross it. As I was doing waby 25mph I encountered some snow my skies wouldn't slide on and did a face plant with no injuries. Everyone seemed to have a good time excluding some very sore feet. Other participants; Don Borad, Marti McGlynn, Joe Whyte, Dave Dykeman, Pam Kane, And Daniel Dennies.

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ECHO NOTICE

The ECHO needs input -- write up your scheduled summer trips, private trips, etc. If the leader doesn't write up the trip, maybe the assistant or one of the participants would. The winter-month issues will be VERY slim if we don't get input.

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April 19-20, 1986 Deer Mtn (9,530')

Diamond Jubilee Climb

Jones/ Rohn

14 of us met at Coso Junction Ranch north of Little Lake for this 30th anniversary repeat climb of the first Sierra Peak Section trip back in 1956. Rose Cartini from Merced and Ron Stork from Modesto came the farthest for this celebration. Norm Rohn had led the 15th anniversary climb back in 1971. We drove about about 7 1/2 miles north on Hiway 395 to the turnoff for the now defunct Sam Lewis Pack Station, turned west on a good dirt road for 1 1/2 miles past the old station and beyond 1/4 mile where we parked our cars alongside Haiwee Creek. We backpacked on the abandoned but mostly good trail along the creek, through beautiful oak, pinyon and juniper forest and through 5 or 6 locations with a myriad of obsidian chips at old indian sites. I found a very nice arrowhead.

Above 6,000 feet the canyon forks and we followed the trail along the dry north fork. Here we encountered a few hundred yards of loose steep sand but we were soon out of it and into firm and more open slopes. After about five miles we topped out at Haiwee Pass (8,200 ft) and then dropped down for two miles to our camp along side the South Fork of the Kern River at 7,500 ft.

The river was only 15-20 yards wide but with a deep, fast charging flow that was impossible to wade. In 1956 the Club trip hiked upstream a couple of miles to a flatter meadow area before crossing but we were able to find a large downed tree below us which crossed 3/4 of the river. Norm remembered from his climb in '71 that the water level rises during the night and so we dropped our packs at the campsite and started right out. Four persons chose to stay in camp and Françoise Walthert had to stay because of an injured hip. Using two belay ropes we spent more than an hour first shinnying across the log (it was too wet to walk across) and then forging through crotch deep COLD water to the other side.

Deer Mountain had been visible to us from Haiwee Pass right down to our camp and in appearance it is a most unimpressive mountain with easy class 1 and 2 gentle slopes to the summit. After crossing the river we walked along, first a trail leading just south of Deer Mountain and then cross country to the top about 2 miles away with 2000 ft gain. There are two small summit areas and Bill T and Norm determined the south one to be a couple of feet higher. We found a little snow on top. There is a terrific view of the Crag Mtn area (it lives up to its name far, far more from the north) and an interesting view of Monache Meadows (mostly under water). We didn't stay long and hurried back to camp, crossing the river just at final light.

Our campfire that night was convivial and appropriate for the solemnity of the occasion. The roaring noise of the river along side was as loud as any that I have slept next to and the next morning we found the water had risen 6-12 inches and was lapping at the bottom of our crossing log and covering it with spray. So, spring crossings are best made in the afternoon. The hike out that morning was uneventful

The approach to Deer Mtn up Haiwee Creek and down to the Kern I found to be beautiful, interesting and moderately strenuous with 3,200 ft gain. Add the river crossing and another 2,000 ft gain and you've got a good outing, better than Pilot Knob, Lamont, Sawtooth and possibly others in the southern Sierra. Too bad the final slopes are so uninteresting. The peak deserves to be scheduled again. Thanks to Bill T Russell, Tom Duryea and Bill Crane for their assistance in the river crossing and thanks to Norm for his usual fine help. -- RON

## Olancha Peak, South East Couloir

Olancha Peak (12,123') dominates the Sierra Nevada crest from the Owens Valley town of the same name. Winter and spring travelers on Highway 395 cannot fail to notice the steep snow-filled couloir left of the summit which feeds Olancha Creek. The snow persists to a relatively low altitude until very late in the season, due to the sun's inability to reach into the couloir as well as to the deep snowpack from avalanches which cascade into it from the steep slopes and side canyons. Several of us have felt that this couloir would be a fine opportunity for a crampon ascent of the peak. On our third attempt in as many years, we were finally successful in mid-April, 1986.

The best approach is up the Walker Creek road, thence north along a rough dirt road paralleling a diversion channel. Any vehicle with average ground clearance can approach to within a half-mile of where Olancha Creek emerges from the couloir on its way to the valley floor.

Because of waterfalls near the entrance to the couloir, it is necessary initially to climb high on the south side. At an altitude of 5300' cross a narrow but steep gully to an improbable 30' class 3 section with good holds. Looking down you'll see a beautiful large waterfall several hundred feet below. Descend and cross another very loose gully, to an overlook at 5400'. Now drop 250' to the stream.

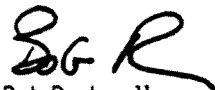
The next 1500 feet of altitude gain involves many interesting problems of blank walls, waterfalls, dense brush and stream leaping. The problems are always solvable, however, and the route is quite enjoyable. In April, snow will first be encountered at or below the 7000' level. Because the snow is mostly due to prior avalanche activity, it is very dense and ideal for ice axe and crampon work. The Sierra Nevada crest is reached at 10,800' and the summit is about 0.75 miles to the north. Snowshoes should be carried because deep unconsolidated snow may be encountered above the 10,000' level. We did not need them in 1986, but not having them in 1985 cost us the summit.

Our camp was a perfect, spacious site at 6100', 3.5 hours from the cars. From there we reached the summit in 7.5 hours. The descent from the Sierra crest included a full 3000' glistade!

After three visits to the couloir, I would recommend not going there later than April. Besides diminishing snow depth, there is evidence of large fields of giant nettles in many locations; in mid-April, the young plants were already 6 to 8 inches tall.

The many different facets of this route make it attractive to the versatile mountaineer. In addition, it is certain that the couloir is almost never visited by man, making the wilderness experience unparalleled. We encountered the carcass of a bear, and considerable fresh evidence of other bears which must enter and leave over the crest.

Successful climbers, all from Ridgecrest/China Lake, were Al Green, Mike Renta, Tom Sakai, Greg Rogers, Terry Moore and I.



Bob Rockwell  
607 Randall Street  
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

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SPS PROGRAMS FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

September 10 Meeting: "Two Against Aconcagua" presented by R.J. Secor. He will explain how to spend \$1500 climbing a peak not on the list. Refreshments by Pat Holleman. Griffith Park Auditorium. 7:30 p.m.

October 8 Meeting: "Peakbagging in Europe" Get current on the further adventures of inveterate traveller and determined mountaineer Dale Van Dalsem. See climbing in Switzerland and the hard-to-get-into or out-of USSR. Refreshments by Paul Kenworthy. Griffith Park Auditorium. 7:30 p.m.

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It seemed like a good idea after a couple years of mountaineering inactivity to try an easy weekend like Moses and Maggie in the Southern Sierra. Our car camp was Shake Campgrounds in Mt. Home State Forest.

It was a beautiful, cool, clear morning Saturday for the several mile hike north to Moses. We crossed the North Ford of the Middle Fork of the Tule River mid towering Sequoia on the highly angled dead fall at Redwood Crossing. We then left the trail and re-crossed the Tule about a mile further on where the trail reapproaches the stream for the first time, there was another much less intimidating log for crossing. We drifted somewhat to the north to find negotiable rocks and avoid steep snow fields which appeared to end in rock walls. This put us on the ridge about 3/4 mile north of the peak. We floundered around on the eastern side quite a while with and without crampons on the mixed hard packed snow and steep rock slab. We saw trail ducks so the route must be straight forward in summer, but not so clear when all the easy parts are filled with steep snow. Over a lunch break we opted for the snow field on the west side of the ridge which though steep seemed to lead directly to the summit. We dropped off the ridge and traversed to a snow chute leading to the top. This went well except the steepness increased with every step, and the last 150 feet was a pretty exhilarating interval of front pointing, step chopping, snow-ice climbing with a little rock technique thrown in. This effort put us on the ridge below and about 1/4 mile north of the peak with a spectacular, knife-edge cornice leading to the summit. Stepping up the edge evoked distant memories of a similar, if grander scale, cornice along Karsten's Ridge on McKinley.

The peak weather was perfectly still and warm, the valley to the west filled with clouds, to the east solid low clouds with occasional wisps across our ridge - very ethereal feeling.

From one of our perches we had noticed a snow chute descending eastward from the peak. We got into it with little difficulty and cramponed easily all the way to the bottom, immediately above our Tule River log crossing. It would have made a direct, if considerably less interesting, ascent route.

Saturday night we again had Shake Campground to ourselves. Sunday we drove several miles to Moses Gulch Campground which is located on the N.F. of M.F. of Tule River about 1/2 mile north of Galena Cr. A monster Sequoia log provides passage to the trail on the east side. The forest trail along the stream is one of the more beautiful in the Sierra, dotted with Sequoia and fine views of the roaring river. About a half mile south of Silver Creek, and rather easy to miss, is the trail which climbs the ridge to Maggie Mt. A rickety old sign named it the "Old Cutoff Trail." It is actually more a depression in the heavy forest, you walk on a carpet of pine needles, dried oak leaves and in open places small plants - the soil is never seen. I felt I was one of the few to traverse this way. It was soon clear

(Continued next page)

## Moses, Maggie (Continued)

why. The trail was constructed when men were men - before switchbacks mitigated steepness. It climbs directly up the interminable ridge - 5,000 feet in several miles. At about 9,000 feet altitude we lost the trail in snow and did the rest on crampons. Maggie is just a 400 foot nob on top. Again the weather was warm and still but cloudless today. Very good views to the east over the Kern River valley toward Olancho and northeast to the Great Western Divide.

It was a fine, if somewhat more strenuous than planned, return to mountaineering. The weather was perfect, and the woods had that spring freshness look of fallen branches, untrammelled trails and sprouting shrubs. In the entire weekend we saw one man and his three children in the Moses Campground, not another person or even a car on the many miles into or out of the forest preserve.

PERKINS/COLLOSEUM

MAY 3/4

MAMEDALIN/VALKASS

This climb was listed in the schedule for the May 24/25 weekend, but it did not seem appropriate to devote Memorial Day weekend to these peaks. After a spectacular logistics endeavour, fourteen climbers signed up to participate in the rescheduled climb on May 3/4. By Saturday morning it became apparent that only six would make the attempt. Those that had to stay home, however, did not miss much.

From a meeting point near the unmarked Sawmill Creek campground, three vehicles proceeded up the dirt road toward Armstrong Canyon. Soon one vehicle was abandoned and its occupants were consolidated into the two 4x4 pickups. The road to the mines in Armstrong Canyon is clear, but it is definitely a four-wheel drive road. Joyously we gained the first 2,200 feet sitting down. Initially we were slated to walk up the old mine road with heavy packs. At about 8,000 feet snow blocked our progress, so we continued on foot. At the only fork in the dirt road, we took the left fork (high road) and discovered that it ended 200 feet above the canyon. Nonetheless, we scrambled down and proceeded on snow up the canyon. The poorly consolidated snow caused frequent exchange of the honor to post-hole at the front of the line. Tents were pitched at about 10,000 feet with assistance from a building wind.

After lunch five of us headed up the obvious chute to the ridge east of Perkins. Snow conditions worsened as we got higher and the wind forced us to assume self-arrest positions frequently. Bruce Gubersky got the award for kicking the most steps. After losing two more people along the way, three of us hit the ridge at 4:30 and decided to abandon the endeavour. In retreat from the gathering storm, we quickly glissaded down the chute to camp. Upon arrival, we discovered that Charmaine's tent has been shredded by the wind. Meanwhile, snow and ice pellets began to pummel us.

Everybody bunked up in the two remaining tents and spent the night fending off the tent top being pressed to our noses by 60-80 mile wind gusts. The weather did not abate in the morning, so we beat a retreat down the canyon to the cars. Owens Valley was peaceful and warm leading us to wonder whether we retreated too soon. But, looking up at the Sierra crest, we could see snow plumes being blown off the peak tops.

The Trinity Alps (so named by an pioneer resort owner because of their resemblance to the Austrian Alps) are located in northwestern California between Red Bluff and Eureka, but are part of the Klamath Mountains rather than the Coast Range. By comparison with the Sierra Nevada, it is a small range in both area (525,000 acres) and height--trails start at 3000' and the highest peak, Mt. Thompson, is barely over 9000'. But it is complete with glaciated valleys and granite peaks, remnant glaciers, mountain lakes, green forests (with some unique trees) and rushing streams, yet lacks the Sierra's crowds of people, trailhead quotas (though wilderness permits are required) and arbitrary campfire restrictions. It is far enough north to escape most tropical moisture, but is subject to Pacific Northwest weather systems; thus some rain can be expected in the summer, usually in the form of thunderstorms. Due to the lower elevation and coastal influence, days are generally warmer and more humid than the Sierra but temperatures drop considerably at night. The original Salmon-Trinity Alps Primitive Area has recently been enlarged and made a Wilderness Area. The Sierra Club book, "Bigfoot Country", divides the Alps into the "White Trinities," the "Red Trinities" and the "Green Trinities".

The granite "White Trinities"--the central and northeast portion--most closely resemble the Sierra Nevada, but of a dozen peaks over 8000', only 5 are named and, except for Caribou Mtn., Hilton Pk. and Mt. Thompson, do not appear to have an easy route to the summit! Ice axes are often needed in this portion of the Alps. A four day (round trip) backpack up Canyon Creek, the most popular (and most scenic) trail, is sufficient to climb Hilton (8964') via Boulder Lake and Thompson (9002') from upper Canyon Creek Lake. With a gallon water container and a little ingenuity, secluded camps with plenty of firewood can be found even in this popular area.

For those with time for a longer trip (7-8 days) and experienced in cross-country travel, a circle trip starting at Canyon Creek trailhead goes over Bear Creek Divide, which provides the best approach to the climb of Little Granite Peak (8043'), and down to the Stuart Fork (which may be difficult to cross in early season.) Ascending the Stuart Fork, a 2-day side trip to Caribou Mtn. (8575') involves a character-building trail climb of 2200' in 3 miles on a dry south-facing slope before descending to Caribou Lake--an early morning start is recommended! (Although Caribou Mtn. is more easily climbed in a separate two-day backpack to Caribou Lake from the north, it is a long drive around to the trailhead.) At the head of Stuart Fork, a cross-country route starts with a Class 3 climb up from Emerald Lake and follows a scenic bench high above Sapphire Lake before crossing a pass and descending to "L" Lake. (Although a "use" trail has minimized the bushwhacking on THIS route, cross-country travel in the Trinity Alps is generally NOT recommended due to the horrendous heavy brush below 7000'!) From "L" Lake, a trail descends to Canyon Creek for the climbs of Hilton and Thompson.

The non-granitic "Red Trinities", the southeast portion, are a more gentle backpacking and peak bagging area. Most 8000' peaks are named and are easily climbed. Going in via the East Fork of Stuart Creek over Bee Tree Gap, Seven Up Peak (8132'), Gibson Pk. (8400'), Siligo Pk. (8162'), Middle Pk. (8015'), Granite Pk. (8091') and Red Mtn (7928') can be climbed in a backpack of 5-6 days.

The "Green Trinities", the western portion, have no peaks that reach 8000' and have not been visited by the writer, although the limestone Thurston Peaks appear to be worthy of interest. However, ALL approaches from the west side or from the north or south outside the Wilderness Area boundary are currently considered dangerous due the armed marijuana growers, who fiercely defend their illegal crops!

The Trinity Alps are only 600 miles from Los Angeles and, as described above, have enough variety for a two week visit. Two excellent new reference books are "The Trinity Alps, a Hiking and Backpacking Guide" by Luther Linkhart, and "The Know-It-All Guide to the Trinity Alps" by Wayne Moss. ("Bigfoot Country" is not worth buying for its information on the Trinity Alps since it mainly covers the western portion and trails that are not recommended for use!) Topo maps (15') are Coffee Creek, Cecilville, Helena and Trinity Dam/Lake. To obtain USFS maps, wilderness permits and other information, write to Shasta/Trinity Natl. Forest, Weaverille Ranger Dist., Dwr. T, Weaverille, CA 96093.

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