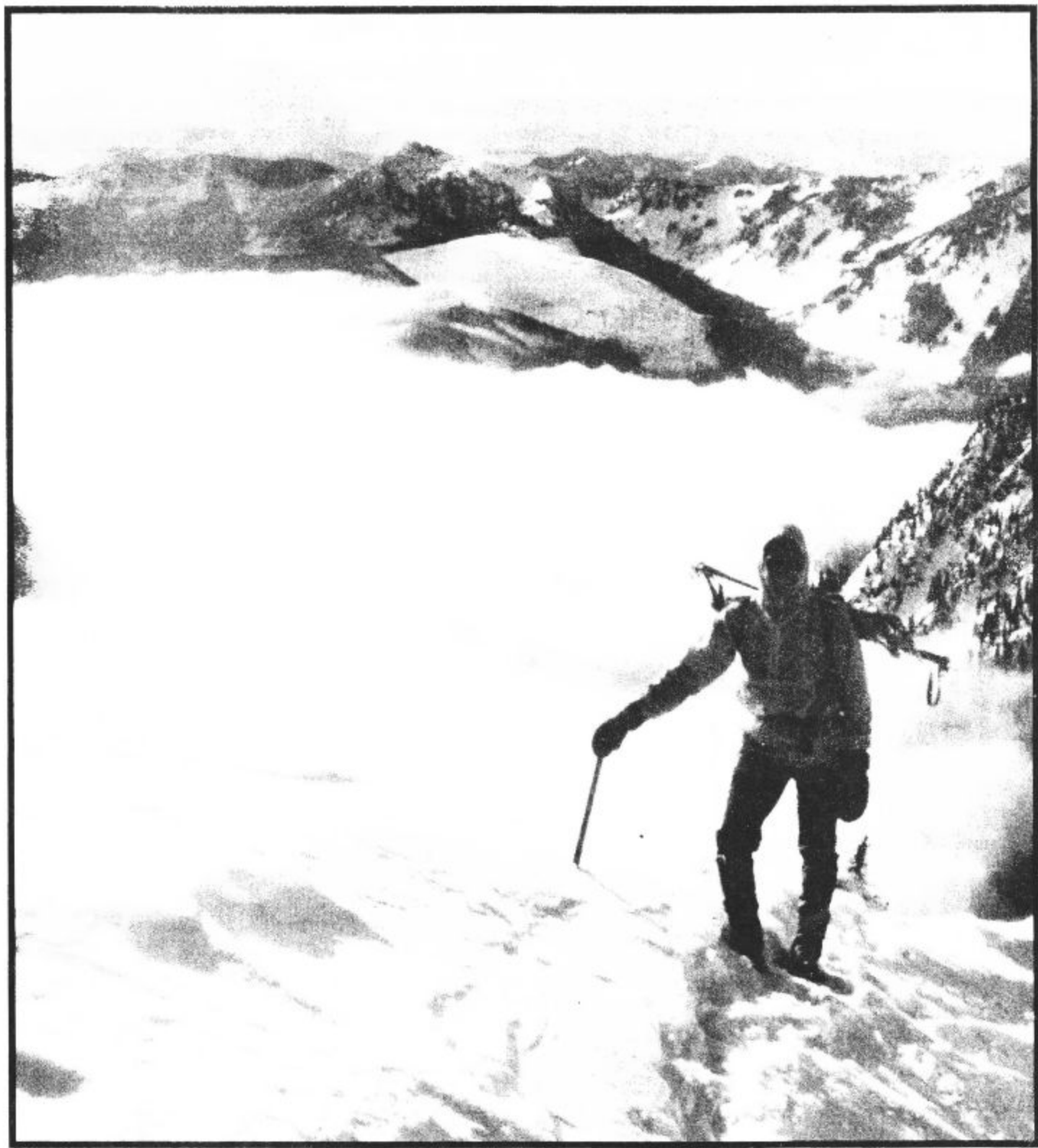


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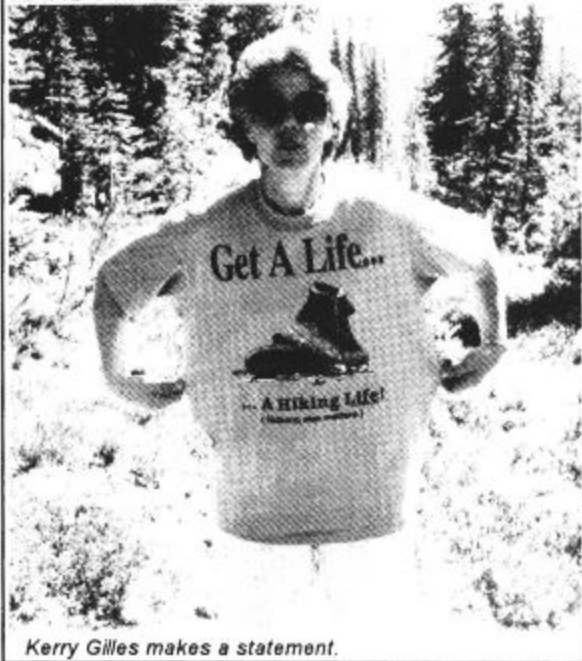
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VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1

RANDOM VIEW—



Don Abbott

Kerry Gilles makes a statement.

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Charlie Janeway walks the winter sky to Red Mountain, near Snoqualmie Pass. Alpine Lakes Wilderness, Washington. Photo by John Roper.

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• • •

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

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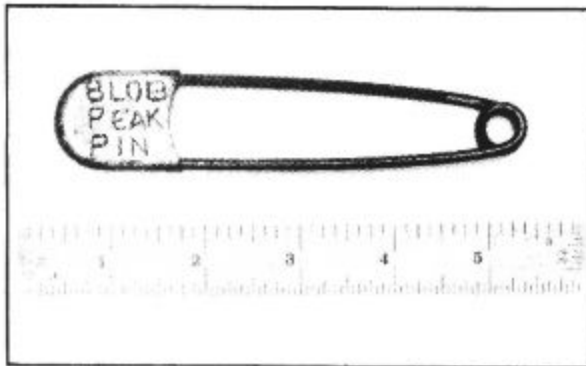
BLOB PEAKS

I really enjoy the magazine, it gets better every month. I especially like the reports from John Roper, clearly the undisputed King of the Peakbaggers.

Back in 1992, in another publication, John listed his 20 favorite Blob Peaks and proposed that climbing them would get you a Blob Peak pin. He made reference to Harvey Manning's earlier list of Blobs.

I would like to add that Harvey was not proposing something new but was referring to an actual award, made back in the early '50s, to those who had, intentionally or otherwise, somehow stumbled up the North Bend dwarf three—Little Si, Fuller Mountain and Herpicide Spire (see "The Mountaineer" Vol. 53, No. 4, March 1, 1960, page 28).

A recent archaeological dig (cleaning out the storage locker) has unearthed one of the original pins. The pin was a handsome piece of jewelry, suitable for wearing at formal and semi-formal occasions and was also useful for emergency repairs.



The Blob Peak Pin.

As can be seen in the accompanying photograph the pin was almost 6 inches long and was often used to hold together a Blobber's Trapper Nelson pack strap or his pants zipper.

Tom Miller
Seattle, Washington

KILLER DEER WARNING

It is astounding that Washingtonians are getting all worked up on the subject of *hypothetical* attacks on wilderness hikers by not-yet-reintroduced grizzly bears. What a clamor! Don't you have any *resident* troublesome animals to worry about?

Meanwhile, here in Oregon we have a *real* animal menace. Not only out in

the woods, but right in civilization. KILLER DEER! There have been three documented attacks on people by mule deer this year; one last year. Each victim was in Wallowa Lake State Park, right among cabins, stables, miniature golf and restaurants—and yet, were they safe? No, they were not!

One buck pinned a woman to the ground and raked her with his antlers. In another attack, the deer circled menacingly around a woman, then caught her in the chest and flipped her backward. Her daughter saved the woman's life by hitting the deer with a camera and throwing rocks at it. Last year, it was a child and a fractured arm.

But are we Oregonians charging forth in all directions, demanding that authorities "do something?" Are we calling for removal of all mule deer from Wallowa County? Are we advocating bounties on mule deer antlers? No, of course not. We are remaining calm.

Craig Ely, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife told our newspaper, *The Oregonian*, that he's going to put up some signs but, he said, "People have got to take some of that responsibility on themselves."

That's what I say, too. We have a right to enjoy the outdoor experience of miniature golf without our lives being at risk.

The situation calls for weapons. I'm for each of us arming ourselves with a large camera and a dozen

rocks. Then, let those bent-on-mayhem killer deer show up, and we'll show them who's boss!

VD
Portland, Oregon

MEMORIES OF HAWAII

The article "Hypothermia in Hawaii?" (*October, page 20*) brought back memories of our trips there.

Don and I hiked into Haleakala Crater on two separate occasions, so long ago that I can't remember exactly the year, but I'm sure it was in the spring. I recall the details of the trips vividly, but I am also using an old (1968) Sunset Travel Book today to help with names, spelling and distances. (I do re-

member calling Louise for advice, because she had written often about her trips to Hawaii in the old *Signpost*.)

On the first trip, probably late 1960s or early 70s, we had been advised by many that Hawaiians *never* hike up the Sliding Sands Trail (not for nothing is it named Sliding Sands) so we planned to hike down Sliding Sands, explore the crater and hike out the Halemau Trail which begins behind Holua Cabin.

We stopped at the ranger station to pick up our keys, drove up to the observatory, unloaded our packs, then Don drove down, parked, and hitch-hiked back up to meet me. It was very cold and windy, and I dug into my pack while I was waiting and dressed in all the extra layers I had with me.

Once we were over the rim of the crater, the wind died and we got warmer and warmer. We arrived at Kapalaoa Cabin (6 miles), and found someone had left greetings for us—the word HELLO spelled out in little white rocks on the ground. Inside, on the table, we found a nosegay of wildflowers and a little stack of hand-rolled cigarettes! (We didn't try them.)

We carried only our clothes, food, emergency stuff. We found lots of heavy grey blankets, hard wooden bunks, lots of quartered logs of some hard, hard, hard native wood, and some very dull axes. Somehow Don managed to chop up enough for a cooking fire in the woodstove. We spread lots of blankets on the floor for padding and slept under more. I remember that there was an outhouse with a can of insecticide spray on a shelf, and we had to spray just before using because the flies and insects were impossible.

The next day, we explored the floor of the crater. We visited every single pit, cave, and fenced-in plot of silver sword that was reachable by trail or marked on our map. We saw the third cabin, Paliku (3½ miles from Kapalaoa), and pecked into the ranger's cabin nearby (much nicer). We looked down the Kaupo Gap that leads to the south shore (8 miles), and put it on our list for some future trip. We did not meet any other hikers, and we decided that the stars over Haleakala are more numerous than in any other sky we had ever seen.

On the third day, we set off for Holua Cabin. The weather, which had been

continued page 6

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS





REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

See "How to be a Pack & Paddle contributor" on page 3. All readers are encouraged to contribute to *Backcountry News*. Information that is particularly helpful includes: distance & elevation gain, condition of trail or route, hazards such as tidal currents, rockfall, avalanche danger, washouts, bees' nests, etc., and pleasant or fun things you encountered.

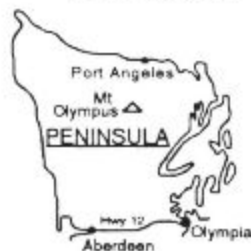
Space is limited; we may have to cut your report to fit available space. Typing is not necessary; we can read just about anyone's handwriting. We're interested in ALL trips, easy and hard, ordinary and exotic.

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-  —Hiking, backpacking on trails.
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-  —Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.



PENINSULA



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow level varies; expect road and trail washouts and trees down from storms.

DUCKABUSH RIVER TRAIL (*The Brothers Wilderness; USGS Mt Jupiter*)—This Troop 70 outing started out like all November Troop 70 outings. In other words, floods, rains, bridges washing away, roads closed, winds. The flooding didn't seem as bad on the Duckabush and we wouldn't have to worry about snow. And as for rain, we'd just carry extra tarps. The mileage was about right—10 miles round-trip with a moderate elevation gain.

Only three of the boys turned out for this hike but their spirits seemed high and things were almost too good to be true—we drove right onto a ferry without having to wait. From Kingston we drove to the Duckabush River road (off Highway 101) and to the trailhead. Of course there were no other cars. Duncan was the newest Scout and had showed up with all the right equipment at the pack inspection the previous Wednesday.

This makes an ideal winter hike or backpack—it's low enough to be out of

the snow and pretty enough for anytime of the year. The trail starts out by climbing Little Hump—not much of a climb really unless you are a little boy and it is the first time you've carried a heavy pack.

Dave patiently stayed behind with the boys, John and Andy hurtled ahead, and I hiked at my usual pace (steady, no stops). About ten minutes on the trail I heard one of the boys ask "How much farther is the top of Little Hump?"

The descent from Little Hump approaches the Duckabush River which this day was high and wild, the waters brown and full of spray. After the scenic reprieve along the river the trail begins to switchback as it climbs Big Hump and as you can well imagine, Big Hump IS bigger than Little Hump.

I caught up to John and Andy who were having lunch at one the viewpoints on the way up. We waited for the rest of the group before continuing. It was quite warm and still no rain.

When the boys caught up with us Willie threw his pack down with a sigh of relief and asked, "Are there many more halfbacks on the trail?" We all burst into laughter. Willie had intended to say *switchbacks*! We promised Willie he shouldn't see too many more halfbacks on the trail and we continued.

From Big Hump the trail goes through a dark section of forest before it descends to the river and to Five Mile Camp, our destination. John and Andy put up three large tarps to cook and/or sleep under should the rains descend. It was 2 o'clock in the afternoon. About a half hour later the kids arrived and

soon it was time to prepare our respective dinners.

Just before John fired up his stove the kids came over and said their stove had caught on fire. Sure enough, it had. Luckily, no one was hurt, so we shared John's stove with the kids. We were all ravenously hungry and sat around like vultures waiting for the water to boil.

The kids had "noodle death" (which is any noodle or macaroni combination out of a box) and we had tacos (real tortillas, real sour cream, hamburger, tomatoes, grated cheese, lettuce). We had done most of the preparation the night before so it was easy to prepare. Dessert was pumpkin pie and whipped cream.

Five o'clock in November—nothing to do but go to bed. Shortly after we retired we heard footsteps coming toward our tents—it was the kids. Willie was the spokesperson for the group and he said they were homesick, REAL homesick. Andy is really good with the little guys so he talked to them for a while and cheered them up before sending them off into the night.

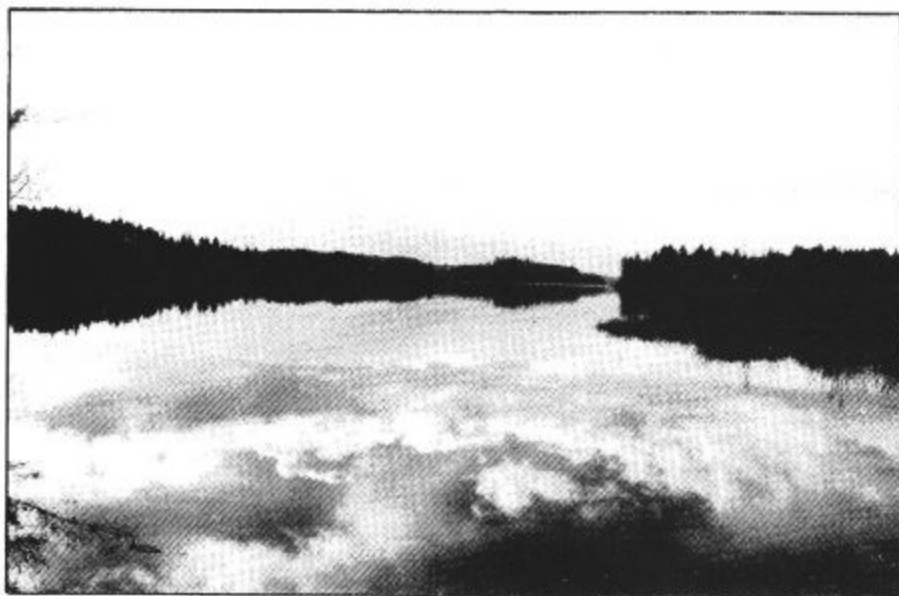
I slept well but John complained about the river being too loud. "Can't you turn down the volume a bit?" he asked the river but the river ignored him. The next morning we saw that the

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Submit your trail reports by this date for the next issue. (Deadline for other departments is earlier, check with us for details.)

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS



Lyle Lovewell

Swan Bay on Lake Ozette, Olympic National Park.


river was lower and the water back to the familiar blue-greens of Olympic rivers. Still no rain.

After breakfast we prepared to leave camp. John let the boys start out ahead since they are slower, then we started behind them. We met one fellow on the trail who said he lives at the mouth of the river and that he used to hunt here years ago, walking up the trail in the dark so he could be hunting by the time the sun came up. He said the elk weren't as abundant as they used to be, that their habits have changed.

Met another party of young men and women hiking in for the day, then no

one. The trip back out seemed short and easy. It was an easy 5 miles—though it was tougher for the little fellows.

Stopping at Dairy Queen is such a Troop 70 tradition that we took a different route back and caught the Bremerton ferry so we could eat at Dairy Queen. A great weekend. No rain, all the kids did well, and the Dungeness River trail is beautiful.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 11/11-12.

 **LAKE OZETTE** (*Olympic Natl Park; USGS Allens Bay, Ozette*)—On November 20 when the government lifted the closure of the

parks, I loaded my canoe and headed to Ozette Lake for a late season paddle. When I arrived the ranger had just taken down the closure signs.

Launching at Swan Bay I had the good fortune of a mild east wind and in less than two hours I made a take out at the campground at the upper end of Erickson Bay. The camp was empty, clean, modestly equipped, but no water.

Following the Ranger's good advice, I secured my food sack on a high line. During the night some visitor rattled a few empty pans that were left on the table.

My plans to hike the trail just south of camp out to the coast were scrubbed as winds and rain intervened.

Ozette is a real gem, one of the few wilderness lakes that can be explored by boat.—Lyle Lovewell, Quilcene, 11/20.

HURRICANE RIDGE—The Clallam Transit shuttle bus will not be offered this winter. In an effort to replace this service, the Park has formed a partnership with Olympic Van Tours to provide shuttle service to the Ridge. Details and prices will be available soon.

Because of increasing concerns about injuries, tubing and sliding will be permitted only at designated areas and within the limitations of modest Park staffing.

Snowshoe walks are offered on weekends, snow permitting, from 12/16 through 3/31. Space is limited; call 360-452-0330 for reservations and more information.

Barring heavy snows or winter

LETTERS *continued from page 4*

perfect, began to change. Clouds rolled up from the gap toward us. The out-house at Holua was in much worse condition than the one at Kapalaoa. We decided to walk all the way out (4 miles from Holua Cabin). The fog overtook us and we didn't see much of the Halemau Trail, but we could hear the ocean beating on the cliff below us. Someday, we promised ourselves, we would come back for the view.

That trip came some years later, maybe early 1980s. Back on Maui, we decided to hike in on the Sliding Sands Trail and out on Halemau all in one day (12 miles). Again, we left the rented car at the top of Halemau and hitched a ride up to the observatory.

The family that drove us said they didn't usually pick up strangers, but

they couldn't imagine what people who looked like us—middle aged, middle class—were doing hitch-hiking. At the top, the wind was so strong it blew away the clip-on sunglasses our driver had been wearing.

Once over the top, we had perfect clear skies and warm weather again. Down Sliding Sands and across Ka Moa O Pele Trails to Holua Cabin, this time I would have gladly stayed the night.

The Halemau Trail was spectacular. I'm so glad we went back. It started out contouring up the inner wall of the crater. When we reached the rim, we beheld the crater stretching out to the horizon on our left, and on our right, a steep drop down to the ocean breaking on rocks far below us. Too soon, we moved beyond the rim and followed an

ordinary trail to the parking lot and car.

At Holua Cabin, we talked to a young man who was camping in a tent in a campground that had been established by the park service in the intervening years. I don't know what the current policy is toward reserving cabins, or whether the campground still exists. I suppose more people are able to experience the crater with a campground there, but the splendid isolation of the first trip would be lost in a campground.

It's been fun dredging up these memories.

Goldie Silverman
Seattle, Washington

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

storms, the Hurricane Ridge road will be open 9am to dusk, Saturday through Monday, through the snow season. Road crews will work Fridays to prepare for the Saturday openings. On Tuesday through Thursday, the road will be open only if no plowing or sanding is needed and sufficient patrol personnel are available. For road information call 360-452-0329.

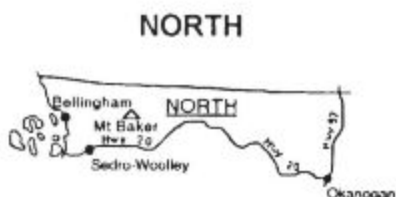
Weather permitting, the road will also be open every day from 12/22 through 1/1.

Entrance fees will be collected at Heart o' the Hills on weekends and Monday holidays throughout the winter.—Ranger, 12/12.

HOH RIVER—A 200-yard washout has closed the Hoh River road about 6 miles before the Ranger Station. The only way to get around the washout on foot is by crossing private land, which is not a good idea.

The road repair may be delayed "until the summer of 1996 or later," according to a Park news release.

DOSEWALLIPS ROAD—Closed for winter at the Park boundary. Road makes a great winter walk.



GENERAL CONDITIONS—High country is snowed in, at last. Roads and trails have storm and flood damage.

COUGAR DIVIDE (Mt Baker Wilderness; USGS Mt Baker)

—Thanks to a trail report last year in *Pack & Paddle*, I heard about the wonders of Cougar Divide.

As Wells Creek road 33, which gives access to the Cougar Divide trail, is on the list of possible roads to be decommissioned, I made a serious attempt to see for myself. In fact, I made three attempts before I could actually rave about the view. My first two attempts were in clouds, but the third attempt was in brilliant sunshine.

The trail is not on any Forest Service map, but it is shown as trail No. 601 in the Forest Plan. For a trail you cannot find on a map, there is a surprising amount of use. Even in the fog, and on the sunny Friday in September we met about 20 other hikers.

From the Glacier Public Service Cen-

ter, drive the Baker Highway 7 miles and go right on the rough Nooksack Falls-Wells Creek road 12.6 miles to its end at 4800 feet.

Follow a jeep track to the highest point of the clearcut. The trail is a broad bootbeaten, sometimes steep path. It enters forest and then climbs into a large meadow, and in a short ¼-mile reaches a terrific 5484-foot viewpoint, one of the most spectacular views of Baker from any trail.

Many hikers are satisfied just to sit and drink in the sight of Mount Baker with the Mazama Glacier emptying into Bold Creek. To the east is Mount Shuksan and the ice-covered Lasiocarpa Ridge that merges with Ptarmigan Ridge. To the west are the green, green meadows of Skyline Divide.

From the viewpoint, the trail gets rougher with numerous logs to step over. As in the next 2 miles, the route loses 150 feet, gains 100, loses another 150 feet and then climbs into flower fields to a 5850-foot high point. Chowder Ridge cuts off the view of the lower

portion of Mount Baker, but views are still great. A climber's route goes on from here.—Wandering Hiker.

METHOW VALLEY—Like everywhere else, our freezing level has been going up and down, but right now it's 24 degrees and skiing is great. We've been getting a fair amount of snow and most of the trails at Sun Mountain are open.

Most of the trails in the Mazama area are also open, and the Rendezvous trail system is open. For a recording with current conditions, weather, and activities, call 800-682-5787.

We did have some problems with flooding on the Methow Community

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BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS



Grant Myers

The Twin Sisters Range, Mount Baker Wilderness.

Trail as a result of the heavy rains. Those sections are being worked on and should be repaired within a week. —Don Portman, Winthrop, 12/16.

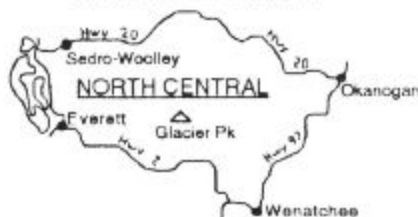
GLACIER CREEK ROAD—Road 39 is closed at 2½ miles due to a slide 4

ALWAYS CARRY THE TEN ESSENTIALS

1. extra food
2. extra clothing
3. map
4. compass
5. knife
6. matches
7. fire starter
8. first aid kit
9. sun protection
10. flashlight

feet deep and 80 feet long clear across the roadway.—Ranger, 11/22.

NORTH CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow level dropping. Lots of flood and storm damage on roads and trails.

STEHEKIN—About a foot and a half of snow on the Stehekin road, but warm weather is reducing that. As of this date, it was slushy and melting.—Stehekin Lodge, 12/14.

BEAVER LAKE (Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS White Chuck Mtn)—Drive to Darring-

ton, then south on the Mountain Loop Highway. Just before the turnoff to the White Chuck River road is the sign and trailhead to Beaver Lake (it's on the right.)

This is a relatively short hike, we read 3 miles, following the Sauk River for awhile and then by Beaver "Lake" ... which is really more of a bog than a lake. It's a trail built on the old railroad grade so the trail is wide and fairly flat. Very pretty and a great winter outing. —Mystery Hiker and Mr. Maphead, Granite Falls, 11/16.

MOUNTAIN LOOP, Barlow Pass to Elliott Creek (Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Bedal) —We drove to Barlow Pass just for fun and saw that the Mountain Loop Highway is closed here due to the last floods.

We decided to walk out to the wash-out and check it out. It's about 3 miles in, just before Elliott Creek crosses the road. It's definitely washed out! No problem walking around the worst part of it or even riding a bike, but getting a car around it is out of the question.

We wondered how yet ANOTHER washout (we've seen several over the years) on this road will effect any plans to pave it over...—Mystery Hiker and Mr. Maphead, Granite Falls, 11/21.

GOTHIC BASIN (DNR; USGS Monte Cristo)—There weren't many cars at Barlow Pass, surprising considering the good weather. I hiked down the old Monte Cristo road about a mile to the Gothic Basin trailhead which is just before the bridge. Even the road walk was pleasant. The leaves and ferns were etched in ice. The air was sharp and clean and cold.

The lower part of the trail was muddy but easy to follow. I expected to hit snow about where the trail breaks out of the trees with the first views of the Monte Cristo peaks and yes, there was snow but it was not a problem.

The problem was the ice. About 1000 feet below the lip of the basin considerable patches of ice began to show up in the rocks on the trail. As I approached the lip of the basin, however, the snow got deeper and the ice wasn't much of a problem.

Just as I entered the basin I ran into another hiker on his way out. He said there was one other person in the basin who had camped there overnight.


It looked to be about a foot and a half of snow in the basin and the tarns had just frozen over.

Ran into the fellow who had camped overnight and after exchanging pleasantries I had the whole place to myself but not for long. The day would be

short and though I was anxious to explore and take more pictures, I didn't want to run out of precious light so I started back down. Why didn't I get an earlier start?

A few people were hiking back out to Barlow Pass along the road but we all kept to ourselves—it was a quiet, reflective day. Perhaps they sensed too that this was one of the last "good" days of the season and wanted to hang on to it as long as they could.

Happy Car was waiting at the trailhead and I drove through Granite Falls quickly, not even risking a glance toward the Timberline (the pic place). —Karen Sykes, Seattle, 11/2.

 **COOPER RIDGE** (*Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Cooper Ridge*)—Depending upon the season a trip up the Cooper Mountain road will take on a variety of flavors. Try it in winter on a weekend and you'll share the road with a significant number of snowmobile users. During the fall hunting season, there will be lots of pickups with drive-along hunters.

In the summer, this would be a scenic access road to approach the south end of the Sawtooth Range. From late spring to fall it would provide an uphill/downhill challenge for mountain bikers who prefer roads to single track riding.

On a Thanksgiving weekend Sunday with about a half day available, it provided an unusual opportunity for me to reach a high elevation in a hurry.

The high snow level coupled with the mostly southern aspect of this approach road meant it was drivable in a passenger car until about the 5000 foot level.

Point 5051 turned out to be ¼-mile walk from my parking spot. It was hardly much of a hike, but the glorious scenery including the Columbia Plateau, Stormy Mountain, and other peaks near Lake Chelan more than displaced any lingering feelings associated with reaching this spot without much of a challenge.

To reach this area, drive about a mile toward Manson from Chelan. Turn right onto Boyd Road and follow signs for Echo Valley Ski Area. At the T intersection just beyond the ski slopes, take a left and begin the long climb toward the ridge above.—Charlie Hickbottom, Wenatchee, 11/26.

NORTH FORK SKYKOMISH RD

—Closed at Troublesome Creek due to slide. Reopening date is unknown.—Ranger, 11/21.

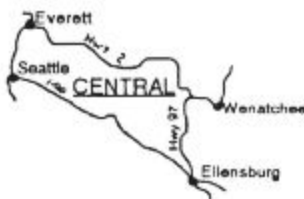
RAPID RIVER RD—Washed out at 2.8 miles.—Ranger, 11/21.

STEHEKIN—The National Park Lodge is open year round with lots of snow touring opportunities. For boat schedule and fares, call 509-682-2224.


LAKE WENATCHEE DISTRICT

Most of the forest roads here have flood damage. White River, Little Wenatchee, Smithbrook, Chiwawa, White Pine, Butcher Creek, Mill Creek, Coulter Creek and many spur roads have washouts. Please call the ranger station for specific conditions.—Ranger, 12/5.

CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow level dropping. Lots of flood and storm damage on roads and trails.

 **SCOTTISH LAKES**—Skiing was wonderful today. We finished marking one of the new trails, and skied on about 40 inches of snow, with powder snow being the top 4 inches. It was 18 degrees all afternoon.—Don Hanson, Snohomish, 12/17.

 **TAYLOR RIVER to SNOQUALMIE LAKE** (*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Snoqualmie Lk*)—Temperatures close to 50

degrees made this a pleasant hike even though it rained all day. There was a lot of water flowing in the Taylor River and its side streams. At several crossings plugged culverts diverted water over the road. The resulting washouts were tricky to cross.

We made a short side trip to Otter Falls. It was a relaxing spot for a rest break. In contrast, Big Creek was a raging torrent. Water was shooting under the bridge like the outflow of a giant fire hydrant.

A sign marked the turnoff to Snoqualmie Lake. This trail was not much different from a creek bed. If you have ever wondered how waterproof your boots are it provides a definitive test. I gave a "thumbs up" to my Gore-tex socks.

The trail enters a nice old growth forest. In two places huge windfalls blocked the route but they were easy to bypass. We passed near a thundering waterfall that we could feel long before it came into view. Just before reaching the lake the trail was badly washed out. We continued upstream about 100 feet to recover tread.

We took a brief lunch break at the lake. Only a few patches of snow were visible on the surrounding ridges. I wondered if we would be the last visitors until next spring. Sadly, the beauty of this spot was marred by a garbage dump left by thoughtless campers. Perhaps we need a few grizzly bears to help police the area.

Round trip: 16 miles with 2500 feet of elevation gain, 8 hours including breaks.—Ken Hopping, Bellevue, 11/24.



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TONGA RIDGE (*Alpine Lks Wilderness; USGS Skykomish, Scenic*)—The road was snow-free until just before the turnoff on road 6830-310. We turned around and parked on bare ground.

Road 310 had been packed by snowmobiles so the walking was easy to the trailhead, about 1.5 miles. On the trail we had a more difficult time in deep snow. We soon entered the forest and found bare stretches of trail under the trees and snowdrifts in the open places. We had lunch at the base of Mount Sawyer. The sun had disappeared at lunch and it was cold.

We had hoped to go to the top of Mount Sawyer, but left it for another day. There was ice and shallow snow on the steep slopes and it would be dark early.—Linda Rostad, Redmond, 11/16.

JIM HILL MOUNTAIN (*Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Labyrinth Mountain, Stevens Pass*)—A training climb loosely associated with the 1997 Electric Denali Expedition brought together six snowshoers for a day of fun and exercise. Amid a good deal of good-natured bantering, this group shared leading through terrain including level firm snow, lost trail due to overhanging vine maple, knee to thigh heavy snow, and even a short section on the return through knee deep water. Despite lacking loop characteristics, this might have been a trip appreciated by the Bulgars.

Even with an awfully late turnaround of 3pm, we ended up turning back 400 vertical feet from the summit. The cloud cover encouraged us to come back another time anyway.



Lunch on Red Mountain with big, snowy Big Snow in back. From left: Charlie, Marshall, Dave, Cindy and Howard. Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

For those wanting to try this trip or a shorter version to Lanham Lake, park at the Stevens Pass Nordic Center parking lot. Immediately after starting up the old Mill Creek Road, turn left onto the Lanham Lake trail, which is signed.

The first mile or so would make an ideal short trip. From there to the lake may get easier when deeper snow cover hides the washed-out trail and the overhanging vine maple.—Charlie Hickenbottom, Wenatchee, 12/2.

MIDDLE FORK SNOQUALMIE RD 56—Road closed at 13.5 miles due to flood debris; impassable. Two wash-outs at 16 miles; road closed at this point.—Ranger, 11/21.

LEAVENWORTH DISTRICT—Numerous roads are gated as road conditions change. Eightmile road 7601 is gated near the Bridge Creek bridge. Icicle road is closed 14 miles up, but will be gated near Snow Lakes parking lot when enough snow accumulates.

The 1996 permit process for the Enchantments is not ready. We will have information by mid-January. Call the ranger station with your name and address and we will be glad to mail you the information as soon as it is available.—Ranger, 12/5.

BEVERLY CREEK BRIDGE—The bridge over Beverly Creek, off the North Fork Teanaway road, is open, having been completely rebuilt. It has been out since 1989.

Now you can drive to the large parking area at the wooden footbridge.—Dave Beedon, Renton.

CLE ELUM DISTRICT—Seasonal gate and road closures are in effect. More roads will be closed as snow limits access. Closures prevent excessive damage to roads.

The following roads are closed due to flood damage: Cooper road 46; Fish Lake 4330 at Little Boulder Creek; Howson Creek road 43300-128; North Fork Teanaway road 9737 one mile before Eldorado Creek; Jungle Creek road 9701; and a continued closure of Cabin Creek road 41 out of Easton.

Call the ranger station for specific information.—Ranger, 12/5.

SOUTH CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow level is dropping. Lots of flood and storm damage on roads and trails.

MOUNT TAHOMA TRAILS —This is the first weekend we've been open and the skiing is wonderful.

Copper Creek Hut is reporting just under a foot of snow, and High Hut and Snow Bowl have 18 inches. The trails are being groomed. The Yurt will not be open until January. It is on Champion land and requires a permit.

Although the trails are open to the public 7 days a week, our Nordic Ski Patrol is out only on weekends. Hut reservations were 60% full by November, but there's still room here and there. Weekdays, of course, are pretty much open for any hut.

For more information, call 360-569-2451.—John Cornell, MTTA, 12/16.

CRYSTAL SPRINGS SNO-PARK—This popular Sno-Park (I-90 exit 62) is now open, thanks to State Parks' purchasing the property.

SILVER SPRINGS SNO-PARK—Will not exist this season due to the highway 410 construction project.

SUMMIT LAKE (*Clearwater Wilderness; USGS Bearhead Mtn*)—We parked at the trailhead at the end of road 7810. The sun was out but the wind was blowing and the weather was changing fast. There was only one other vehicle and the two men inside appeared to be bowhunters.

John Roper

The first few hundred yards of the trail had turned to a small stream but this improved as we gained elevation. There had been some heavy rain and the trail was pretty soft in some spots but was otherwise in good condition.

We had planned on doing some snowshoeing so I had called the White River ranger station before heading out. I was told that the snow level was very high and it was unlikely we would find even a trace. We left the snowshoes behind and saw only tiny patches of snow in the lake basin.

When we got to the lake, we could see the bottom half of Mount Rainier. We took in the view and ate lunch quickly as the wind had picked up and it was getting colder. It began to rain as we walked back down the trail.

We saw what looked like a blue grouse on the trail about half-way down. It just continued to walk on the trail in front of us for several yards before flying away and landing in a nearby tree. We saw two other parties of hikers on the way down and we arrived back at the Blazer at about 2 o'clock. By this time, it had stopped raining and the sun was out again. Typical Cascades weather.

This was a good day hike of about 5 miles. There were some blowdowns over the trail but they were small and easy to climb over. The road to the trail was in pretty good condition although it appeared that there had been some recent logging. Some spots on the uphill side of the road looked pretty weak from erosion.—Missy Rogers, Sumner, 11/24.

COMET FALLS (*Rainier Natl Park; USGS Mt Rainier West*)—A few inches of snow were on the first ½-mile of trail with snow depth increasing as the trail gained elevation. Lucky for us, somebody booted it up to the second waterfall, packing down the trail.

Beyond that I had to break trail through at least two feet of early fluff, most of the way to Comet Falls. Some folks who were booting it redirected me to the proper waterfalls, so I followed, letting them break trail. Comet Falls was impressive with icicles on the cliffs. We planned to continue to Van Trump Park but didn't when we considered the several feet of snow to break through.

Returning to the trailhead was easy with the trail packed and downhill. I'm glad I chose to make my first visit to Comet Falls on snowshoes in winter. It was a good chance to travel one of Mount Rainier's more popular trails without the crowds.

Chains or a four wheel drive were required past the Nisqually Glacier bridge.—Jeremy Boyer, Olympia, 12/3.

MOUNT RAINIER NATL PARK—Cayuse and Chinook Passes closed. Mowich Lake road gated at Paul Peak.

Stevens Canyon road closed. White River road closed.

Longmire Inn open year round. Paradise Visitor Center open weekends and holidays only. Sunshine Point campground open year round. All other facilities closed.—Ranger, 12/5.



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow levels are dropping. Lots of flood and storm damage on roads and trails.

GLENWOOD—At the Flying L, and other areas around 2000 to 3000 feet, we have very little snow, and that's icy. We hope the next storm coming in will bring snow down to our level.

The local nordic club had a ski trip out of the Smith Butte Sno-Park yesterday, however, and Randy Smith said

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Darryl Lloyd, Flying L

Skiing on the south side of Mount Adams, near Glenwood.

there is 12 to 18 inches of fresh snow that's as close to powder as we get around here.—Darvel Lloyd, Flying L, 12/17.

OREGON



TRIPLE FALLS TRAIL

(Columbia Gorge Natl Scenic Area)

—Four of us (and the dog) parked at Horsetail Falls on the Old Highway. Ascended rapidly on switchbacks to where the trail passes above the falls. In $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile the trail passes underneath Ponytail Falls through a shallow cave. Here you can pause and watch the water blasting down into the pool at firehose pressure.

In another $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile is another unique spot—a viewpoint where you can see right down through the very narrow notch of Onocenta Gorge about a mile to where traffic is passing on the Old Highway.

Shortly after the bridge over Onocenta is the T-junction of the Onocenta Trail, which will take a determined hiker all the way to the top of Larch Mountain. Our plan was not to go that far, but to get to Triple Falls (2 miles) at least, and probably farther.

Soon we were at Triple Falls, which looks exactly like the name would imply. A number of people were monopolizing the viewpoint, so we barely

paused for water and hiked onward, over a newish bridge.

The trail ran along the creek for about a mile and then crossed on a log bridge. A quarter-mile farther we found the Franklin Ridge trail junction in light rain. At an old campsite we had a rain-picnic. Then we called it a day and hiked out.

This is a very nice hike for late season, and gives you a lot of unique scenery for not very much effort.—Jim Miller, Portland, 11/18.

ELSEWHERE



KAUAI, Hawaii—To extend my hiking season, I went southwest—way southwest. Other than two days of torrential downpours, sightseeing all around this island was exceptional. But the highlight was the two days of hiking I took.

The first one was an attempt to climb

a mountain called Queen Elizabeth's Profile, on the southwest "corner" of this round island. I drove the rental like I would never have driven my own cars, through puddles and mud as far as I dared to the backside of sugar cane fields.

Then I hiked through mud, streams, and two cattle herds (with bulls!) to the base of the mountain, where I began my ascent through trees and brush. My goal was what appeared from a distance to be a grass-covered slope. When I emerged from the trees, the "grass" became neck-high bracken fern so dense as to be absolutely impenetrable.

Traversing laterally in search of another route, I finally discovered (an hour later) a trail I could follow up. It was muddy and heavily used, albeit by something short. By stooping, I made good time until suddenly I heard not 20 feet ahead the telltale squealing and grunting sounds of pigs—and not the barnyard variety!

I ascended the nearest tree, and in doing so scared the tusk-bearers on up the mountain. It was an exhilarating moment, in retrospect... That did, however, convince me that cross-country hiking on this island was more of a challenge than I wanted on a vacation.

Instead, to finish out the day on a positive note, I went to a nearby secluded beach and hiked up and through

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BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

one cave and into another, until my flashlight went out!

The next day was the hike of all hikes, as far as awesome scenery is concerned. On a catamaran up the beautiful Na Pali coast the previous week, we had looked straight up 3000 feet and been told about a trail that followed the cliff line way "up there," and I had to find it. After talking to some locals, I figured out I could make a 12-mile loop by combining a couple of trails, starting from near the top of the famous Waimea Canyon.

The Nualolo trail started from Kokee State Park and went through dense forest for about 3 miles, with only tropical trees, wildflowers, and colorful birds to view. Suddenly, the ocean appeared directly in front of me, although I was still about 1 mile away from the cliff edge. The trail led to a narrow ridge between two coastal valleys (Nualolo and Awaawapuhi) that lead out to the ocean and are completely separated, each with beautiful, secluded beaches, inaccessible except by boat, and then only in the summer. I was able to go all the way out to the end of the ridge, where the "point" was 3000 feet above

the ocean, and the view included Niihau Island 18 miles to the southwest, the ocean as far as the eye could see, and the entire Na Pali coastline to the northeast. Looking down with binoculars, I was able to make out the same tour boat at the same spot I had previously looked up from—surrounded by spinning dolphins, jumping and doing what their name describes.

From this spot I backtracked 1 mile to the intersection of the trail I had come out on, and the Awaawapuhi trail, the latter of which I then hiked in and out of forest and along brief cliff exposures for about 2 miles to another ridge trail overlook with a view equivalent to the previous one—magnificent! Then it was 3 miles UP to the road, and back down the road adjacent to Waimea Canyon to the car.

Seeing the Na Pali coastline from any perspective, let alone two in one week, is the view of a lifetime. The only way I could top this would be the Na Pali trail that is 11 miles long and follows the beach, including portions that are 16" wide carved a hundred years ago out of the sheer cliff walls. Next time...—Steve Gideon, Olympia, 11/5.

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FOUND—Ladies ring, Tiger Mountain. Call 206-363-6978 (Seattle).

FOR SALE—Kelty Tioga frame pack, red, \$50. Two Tracks Field Staff walking sticks, 48", \$15 each. 206-363-6978 (Seattle).

FOR SALE—Hart skis, Comp SL 2200, 194cm with Look TT08 bindings. Great condition! \$275. 206-933-1621 (Seattle).

GUIDEBOOK—The guidebook, WINTER CLIMBS: One Day Ascents, is available. The original 1993 guide plus supplement which includes new peaks and routes is \$8.00. The supplement only is \$1.75. Price includes mailing costs. This guide can be obtained from Dallas Kloke, 4012 M Ave, Anacortes WA 98221 (360-293-2904). Self-published paperback, 128 pages.

INTERESTED IN HIGH LAKE FISHING? Washington State Hi-Lakers club meets third Wednesday of each month

at Mercerview Community Center, 7:30pm. For information, call George Bucher, 206-821-5752 (Kirkland).

FOR SALE—Used one summer: size 8 Raichle climbing boots, \$100. Internal frame Lowe Contour 4 pack, \$100. One pair crampons \$15. 360-387-6546 (Camano Island).

FOR SALE—North Face Snow Leopard internal frame backpack. Women's Large. The pack is 4-5 years old, but has only been used 2 or 3 times. \$75. Call Sheila, 206-454-2546.

WASHINGTON SKI TOURING CLUB—Meets first Thursday of each month November through April, at Phinney Neighborhood Center, 6615 Dayton Avenue North, Seattle, at 7:30pm. **HOTLINE** for more information 206-525-4451.

FOUND—A pair of woman's prescription bifocal glasses in a softcase, on a small side trail to Dewey Lakes overlook from Naches Peak loop. Contact Frank Sincock, 206-747-2437, Bellevue.

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oculars, snowshoes, sleeping bags, stoves. Old VW, good trail car. Dealers welcome. Bob Kinzebach, Pic-Tour Maps. Call for details: 206-839-2564.

WOMAN, 45 yo, looking for a guy who would like to hike, walk, laugh (softly), in the Cascades; later in the season—cross-country skiing. Give me a call, 206-685-7504. Fransine.

NEED walking partner, Kitsap Peninsula. Also PCT in spring. For questions call Sharron, 360-876-0879.

HAVE CANOE, will travel.

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WOMAN AGE 40 seeking men friends for day hikes, backpacking, downhill and cross-country skiing. Preferably South Cascades, Mount Rainier and Olympics. Contact Jo, 360-264-2128.

MALE HIKER/CLIMBER—aged 43, seeking a woman partner for adventurous backcountry travel, mountaineering, technical rock routes, and cross-country skiing. Contact Charlie in Wenatchee at 509-664-6710.

JIM HAMEL

The Quest to Make THE PERFECT PACK

Last year in *Pack & Paddle* I wrote about my "search for the perfect backpack" (*July 1994, page 27*). In frustration at never finding the perfect pack (probably only because I never visited McHale & Co.), in 1991 I began a still-continuing quest to *make* the perfect backpack.

Since then, I have learned that there never *will* be a perfect backpack as different circumstances (weather, trip length) call for packs with varying capacities and features.

Currently I have nine packs (five "Hamel Packs," three Ospreys, one Dana Designs) ranging in size from about 1500 to 6000 cubic inches. Usually you can find a Hamel Pack on display at Seattle Fabrics.

SEWING MACHINE

When I first started making packs I used my wife's portable Baby Lock but continually was taking it in for repairs. The typical home machine is not strong enough to sew through multiple layers of cordura and webbing.

For outdoor gear you really need a heavy duty commercial sewing machine mounted on a table top with the motor mounted under the table running the machine by a belt and pulleys. Even so, it is still difficult to sew through thick materials (such as a foam hip belt) but one advantage of a commercial machine is that you can turn the pulley by hand for slow sewing.

Eventually I paid \$750 for a very nice Singer 20U mounted on a table top. You can find a nice selection of machines for sale at Sewing Machine Supply in Renton, or at C. H. Holderby's in Seattle.

Also, the last time I was at Seattle Fabrics they had a couple of used table-top sewing machines for sale.

GETTING STARTED

In 1990 I ordered a custom pack from a local manufacturer (Mountain Systems, now known as Trigon). The

owner, Paul Larson, invited me to watch in the shop as the seamstress put on the finishing touches.

As I watched her sew, I thought "that doesn't look too difficult!" I bought a piece of matching fabric from Paul and enlisted my wife to help design and sew an accessory pocket for my new pack.

The workmanship was poor at best, but making that one small pocket stimulated my imagination and motivated me to design and make my first pack. To this day I still do not particularly care for the tedium of sewing, but what I *do* enjoy is designing a pack, seeing it take shape, and finally putting it to use on the trail.

At first I bought fabric, notions (such as zipper and thread), and hardware (buckles and webbing) at the only two places I could think of—REI and Fabricland.

Then, I discovered Seattle Fabrics.



The Hamel Ultralite Pack: 4000+ cubic inches and 4 pounds. Made of pack cloth with twin 5/8" aluminum stays. Top loading plus side zipper access; detachable rear pocket; fized shoulder harness with adjustable backpad.

Now, *this is my kind of store!* Seattle Fabrics has every kind of outdoor fabric you can imagine, in all sorts of colors, plus all the necessary extras like buckles, webbing, zippers, and foam. I travel on business in eight Western states and I have yet to find another store that even remotely compares.

Even better for the neophyte pack maker, Seattle Fabrics has *patterns*. The first pattern I bought was for a RainShed "alpine rucksack." This project taught me some of the basic concepts I needed to know to eventually design and make my own gear, such as:

Right side and wrong side (or, sewing "inside out"): The "right" side of a fabric is the side that will be visible when you view the finished product while the "wrong" side will be on the inside of the pack.

Basically, you have to sew the pack "inside out" so the seams are not visible. You do this by placing two pieces of fabric together with the "right" sides facing each other ("wrong" sides out). When you sew the seam and turn the fabric right side out, the stitching will be invisible on the inside of the pack.

With some fabrics, like Cordura, the right and wrong sides are obvious. With other fabrics, such as uncoated packcloth, the difference is not so obvious. I once made a pack of packcloth, sewed in one panel wrong side out, and did not notice the error until the pack was finished. I had to take out the seams and re-sew that panel—a lesson learned that I have not had to repeat.

Seam allowance is the overlapping edge of fabric that sits outside the stitch line. For example, if you sew together two pieces of fabric 4" long the resulting piece will *not* be 8" long. If the stitch line is 1/2" in from the edge of the fabric, the resulting piece will only be 7" inches long.

This concept becomes extremely important when you make your own pat-



Jim Hamel

The Hamel rucksack: about 3500 cubic inches and 3 pounds. Made of packcloth, it is toploading, with fixed suspension, rear shovel pocket with attached organizer pocket, side wand pockets, and sleeping bag straps.

terns because if you do not figure in seam allowance, the final pieces will not sew together correctly.

MATERIALS AND COLORS

Picking the materials and colors is one reason it is fun to design and make your own gear.

The many types of fabrics and materials require you to decide what trade-offs are most important to you since there is a pretty clear relationship between weight and durability.

Do you want the indestructibility of a heavy truck or the nimbleness of a sports car?

- **Fabric Weight:** 1000d Cordura is one of the strongest and best looking fabrics for packmaking, but also is quite heavy; the weight adds up in the finished product surprisingly quickly.

A better choice is to just use 1000d Cordura for the bottom of the pack, 500d Cordura or packcloth for the main pack body, and nylon tafetta or ripstop for trim items like a spindrift collar.

- **Waterproofing:** Coated fabrics are heavier than uncoated but can be used to make a virtually leak-proof pack. However, there is a much wider range of colors and materials available in uncoated fabrics. I usually carry a water-

proof packcover anyhow, so I tend to pick lighter fabrics that match the chosen color scheme.

- **Foam Padding:** Foam is available in varying thicknesses. Open-cell foam is soft and "cushy" but when used in shoulder straps and hip belts must be backed by denser closed-cell foam or HDPE (high density polyethylene) for support.

The thicker the foam, the softer the ride but the heavier the pack.

- **Frame:** Aluminum "stays" (simple lengths of flat aluminum bent to shape) form the frame that keeps the pack in shape against your back. 1" wide stays are stout and provide good support; 5/8-inch-wide stays have more flex and require careful packing, yet are much lighter. You also may, or may not, add a plastic framesheet to stiffen the pack horizontally to reduce "round out" when the pack is loaded and compression straps tightened.

- **Access:** Zippers add convenience and weight. You might design a pack with a separate zippered sleeping bag compartment, or, you might save weight by making your pack a simple one-compartment sack.

One of the most interesting aspects of making your own packs is that you can choose your own color scheme. Not only can you pick your own fabric colors, but nothing says the various straps and webbing have to be black. Blue, purple, red or yellow straps can complement your main pack color.

Features.

Creating your own backpack design allows you to incorporate the features that are important to *you* rather than accepting features that are designed to meet the "mass market" range of tastes.

Some features are time-tested and are fairly common to most packs; for example, almost every top-loading pack has a floating top pocket and spindrift collar so you can expand or contract the pack depending on the size of the load.

There are a number of ways to research possible features:

- Get your hands on every pack-maker's brochure you can. A good source of information is the advertising in *Backpacker* magazine—the annual gear issue (usually out in the spring) gives all the manufacturer's phone numbers.

- Visit every mountaineering store in the area; no one store carries all the



Jim Hamel

Rucksack suspension system.

major brands. Examine each pack closely and ask for a brochure if available.

- Ask your backpacking friends what features they like on their packs, what features they don't like, and what features they would like to see in the "perfect pack."

Here are examples of features I have incorporated into various packs (no "new technology" here):

1. Top loading vs. panel loading:

I've gotten to where just about every pack I make has both. You just can't beat the convenience of being able to stuff gear in through the top or reach gear through a back panel.

A variation of this theme is side zippers that give access into both sides of the pack; however, my experience is that side zipper access is not nearly as convenient as a back panel. Remember that panel zippers must be very heavy-duty (size 7 or 10) and will add weight to the finished pack.

2. Separate zippered sleeping bag compartment:

Experience tells me that this is a lot of extra work (both design and sewing) for extra weight but questionable extra value.

I'd rather put my sleeping bag in a compression stuff sack, then stuff it into the bottom of the pack through the back panel.

3. Detachable daypack: this is one feature I have incorporated on almost every full-size pack I've made.

On the trail, the DD serves as a large external pocket to carry light gear such as backpacking pillows and extra clothing (nothing heavy—you don't want to cantilever the pack away from your back). After making camp you have a comfortable pack for exploring.

Most commercial packs have a removable top pocket that converts to a fanny pack, which limits what you can carry and can hurt your back since there are no shoulder straps to help carry the load.

4. Small toiletry pocket (similar to a travel kit), which I usually attach to the outside of the pack with velcro and a single strap and buckle.

This keeps all those small essentials handy (including candy) without having to dig into the top pocket or uncinch compression straps on the main pack body.

5. Detachable top pocket with a layer of fleecce on the underside: at



The Hamel Backpack: about 5000 cubic inches and 6 pounds, made of 500d Cordura. Includes daypack with its own suspension and detachable toiletry pocket. Top pocket has three separate compartments. Top loading and zipper side access; separate sleeping bag compartment with zip-out divider. Suspension is twin 1-inch aluminum stays plus Delrin rod.

Jim Hamel

night I can remove the pocket and stuff in extra clothing to make a pillow. I haven't seen this on a commercial pack but my friends who carry "Hamel Packs" like this feature the best.

MAKING PATTERNS

To convert your backpack design concept to reality you will have to make patterns, which sounds easy until you begin to actually fit the individual components (particularly curved pieces) together.

This is why you should start with a commercial pattern like the RainShed Alpine Rucksack; then design your own simple projects (like an accessory pocket) and work your way into more complex patterns.

Patterns will be easier to work with and last longer if made of posterboard (available from Michaels for about 25 cents a sheet). To make my first "original" design I cut and taped many small pieces of posterboard together to create what looked like a paper-mache mockup of a pack, then used a disposable knife to cut along the seams.

Now that I have learned to conceptualize how curves will fit together, I use a yardstick and flexible (bendable) ruler to design and measure the various pieces directly on to the posterboard.

Before making patterns you need to decide whether they will or will *not* include the seam allowance—the extra fabric along each edge to allow for overlapping and sewing pieces together.

When I make patterns, before I cut out the posterboard I always add 7/16" along all edges—that way I can just lay the pattern on the fabric, mark it with chalk, and cut along the chalk lines without having to remember to add the seam allowance.

SUSPENSION DESIGN

Designing and making the suspension is time consuming and can be quite frustrating. I recommend that you *study every pack and brochure you can get your hands on* before you settle on a suspension design.

The difficult issues to solve are:

- Will the shoulder harness be "fixed" or "adjustable" (able to move up or down to adjust for torso length). An adjustable shoulder harness requires a more complex design and adds weight, yet is necessary if other people will be using your pack.

If the pack will need to fit only one person, the RainShed "Alpine Ruck-

sack" pattern walks you step-by-step through the process of making basic shoulder straps and attaching them (but note that the RainShed shoulder straps do not have the anatomic "recurve" that you find on the top-grade commercial packs).

If your suspension will be fixed it is crucial that you be "right on" with your placement; more than once I have had to move the attachment points which is not easy on a finished pack. *Don't forget the load lifter straps!*

- Will your suspension have a "frame," typically one or two aluminum stays that support the pack? A backpack without a frame is actually a "rucksack" (a la RainShed) with limited carrying capacity since weight cannot be transferred to the hipbelt.

You want the stays to be removable, so they can be re-bent, and 2" webbing works perfectly to create tunnels for the stays. However, you must carefully determine the order to sew the webbing onto the pack so that later you don't sew something across the webbing—thereby closing off the stay tunnels.

- Designing the hipbelt and attaching the hipbelt to the pack: Thoughtful design is crucial to ensure that the hipbelt will be able to take most of the weight of the pack.

The best design, for me, has been for



The Backpack suspension system.

Jim Hamel

the bottom ends of the aluminum stays to fit into webbing slots on the back of the hipbelt. Another difficult problem to solve is to put curvature in the belt while also cupping the belt over your hips. It's easiest to start with something simple (along the lines of Dana Design's OSL belt or Mountainsmith's Omni belt) and work your way up from there.

Osprey Packs has an interesting suspension system that uses a plastic delrin rod to both transfer weight to the hipbelt and hold the pack's shape to resist round-out. I used a similar delrin rod on one of my packs with very satisfactory results.

FINISHWORK

Those extra little "details" can really add to the finished product. Examples are on the higher-end commercial packs at stores like Swallow's Nest (Seattle), Backpacker's Supply (Tacoma), or Marmot Mountain Works (Bellevue):

- For zipper pulls, use short pieces of patterned cord in colors that complement your pack (available at Seattle Fabrics & REI). Seattle Fabrics also has small black plastic caps that clip on the ends of the cord for a professional finished look.

- "Tape" all exposed seams using 1" grosgrain ribbon that is folded over the exposed fabric edges. This will keep the fabric edges from fraying and really add to the overall quality of construction.

- "Bar tack" all stress points, particularly where webbing attaches to fabric, by going back and forth using a very tight zig-zag stitch.

- Finish webbing ends (compression straps, etc.) by folding the last inch of webbing back over itself and putting a stitch line near the end.

PACK-MAKING "HIGHS"

- Choosing your own color scheme.
- Choosing the features you want (and maybe even designing some new ones).

- Completing a zipper and having it work right.

- Sewing the large pieces together (a lot of visible progress in a short period of time).

- Seeing the pack take shape.
- Finally finishing (!) the pack after many, many hours of tedious work.

- Showing your pack to friends and acquaintances, who are at first skepti-



Jim Hamel

The Hamel Expedition Pack: about 5000 cubic inches plus 1500 cubic inches in accessory pockets, about 5½ pounds. Material is purple packcloth with blue 1000d Cordura, with adjustable shoulder harness; twin 1-inch aluminum stays; detachable daypack with its own suspension; detachable toiletry pocket. Both top- and panel-loading. Detachable top pocket converts to pillow (fleece underside).

cal then incredulous that you actually designed and made it yourself

- Using the pack on the trail and finding out that yes, it *really does work* as well as a commercial pack.

PACK-MAKING "LOWS"

- Making the patterns (hours of drudgery in planning, measuring and cutting with no real progress to show for it).

- Making the suspension (shoulder straps and hip belt)—very tedious work requiring lots of thought and planning. On the last pack I made I got lazy and bought a spare Osprey hipbelt so I wouldn't have to make one myself.

RESOURCES

Getting started is easier than you think:

- Get a copy of Louise Sumner's book *Sew & Repair Your Outdoor Gear*. This book does not have any backpack projects, but there are a number of helpful chapters that explain and illustrate many of the concepts.

I've occasionally seen this book at

mountain shops but it is almost out of print. You can order copies while they last direct from Mountaineers Books (800-553-4453).

- Buy a RainShed pattern—many projects are available ranging from simple and small, to large and complex. The instructions are very well written and illustrated. Available at Seattle Fabrics or RainShed in Corvallis.

- Visit Seattle Fabrics (3876 Bridge Way North in Seattle; 206-632-6022), look at all the materials and fabrics and "homemade" projects hanging throughout the store.

Ask lots of questions—I've always found the people there to be very helpful. While you're there, look around—you may even see a "Hamel Pack" hanging on one of the walls.

Other Seattle-area suppliers for miscellaneous materials:

- *Aluminum stays*: 1" aluminum is available at Metal Shorts (downtown Seattle, 206-382-0305). Alaskan Copper & Brass (near Kingdome in Seattle, 206-623-5800) can custom-cut narrower widths for lighter (and less supportive) stays.

- *Plastic for plastic framesheets*: Laird Plastics (near Boeing Field in Seattle, 206-623-4900)

- *Foam*: Seattle Fabrics carries a limited selection of closed-cell foam. For open-cell foam and High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), see Foam Rubber City in Des Moines (south Seattle, 206-878-8114). 1/4" HDPE is an excellent stiffener for hipbelts and shoulder straps.

- *Delrin rod*: Port Plastics in South-center (206-575-4994). Minimum purchase is \$50 although they did process a \$35 order for me.

Hang out at mountaineering shops and carefully inspect the equipment. Pick up every brochure you can get your hands on. Visualize-conceptualize-dream!

See you on the trail—I'll be the one with the "different" looking pack, undoubtedly with some purple in it and with colored webbing.

Jim Hamel, of Federal Way, is still searching for the elusive perfect pack, but is thoroughly enjoying the process.

LEE MCKEE

Scottish Lakes, Alive and Well

—BACKCOUNTRY SKIING IN THE CASCADES—

The winter of '93-'94 was a bummer for me when it came to backcountry skiing. No, it wasn't the snow conditions. And it wasn't because of any injury. What happened was that one of my favorite destinations had been closed.

That was the season that Bill and Peg Stark decided not to open their Scottish Lakes Cross-Country Ski Area (otherwise known as "High Camp").

It was a cozy collection of cabins at 5000 feet elevation on the edge of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. For ten years I had enjoyed winter in the backcountry here, and now it wasn't going to be open. Bummer!

RE-OPENED LAST YEAR

Fortunately for me and others who enjoyed High Camp, the closure lasted only one season. Scottish Lakes re-opened for the '94-'95 winter, much to my delight.

Marc and Linda Wells of Woodinville and Don and Cris Hanson of Snohomish

leased the area from the Starks who, in their late 70s, no longer wanted the challenge of running the ski camp. This year the Wells and the Hansons have taken over official ownership and are set for their second year of operation.

What makes Scottish Lakes unique? Let me tell you about the trip Ann and I took last year and you decide.

GETTING THERE

The trip began at the private parking area just off Highway 2 about halfway between Stevens Pass and Leavenworth. This is where you leave your car and start the trip to the cabins—about 8 miles up a closed forest road with an elevation gain of about 2900 feet.

Snow conditions and season decide the means of transportation used. Usually it is by either snowmobile or Sno-Cat. We were the only ones heading up this morning and would be going by snowmobile. Camp manager Brice met us in the parking lot and stowed our gear and skis on a sled that was towed behind the snowmobile.

We donned our warm and windproof clothes and were soon on our way, with Ann riding behind Brice on the snowmobile, and me standing on the back of the sled. The snowmobile can zip right along, so the sled passenger needs to hang on, stay balanced, and be prepared for a bouncy ride. And there is a definite wind chill factor, but I like it! Part way up we switched so Ann could enjoy the sled ride, too.

THE CABINS

At High Camp we were shown to our cabin. There are seven, they are rustic, and each has its own character. What they all have in common is that each is a single room with wood burning barrel stove for heat, propane or oil lanterns for light, beds for sleeping (bring sleeping bags), and propane burner, dishes and utensils for cooking.

Water is provided in jugs from a spring and waste water is collected in a



Zippering through meadows on the ridge above camp.

bucket for disposal. All the cabins share centrally located outhouses (be prepared for a chilly walk if you're one who makes nocturnal visits to such facilities).

We were assigned the top unit of a snug two-story cabin. After carrying our gear up the outside stairs, we settled in.

The first order of business was starting a fire to take off the chill as we unpacked our stuff. Besides the equipment we would need for backcountry skiing, we brought sleeping bags, books to read, an assortment of clothing, and food. We ate lunch while deciding where to ski for the afternoon.

MANY CHOICES

There are a number of options. You can choose from marked trails, you can make your own trails on nearby open hillsides, or if your skill level is up to it you can try for Lake Julius, Loch Eileen, or Lake Donald (the "Scottish Lakes") in the adjacent Alpine Lakes Wilderness.



Snug cabins make comfortable winter accommodations.

Ann Marshall / Lee McKee

Ann Marshall / Lee McKee

We opted to spend the afternoon skiing some of the close-in trails and hill-sides. Over the years we have experienced a variety of snow conditions from ice to powder so you need to go prepared for anything. While the defined routes are marked, they are not groomed so skiing can be challenging.

This afternoon we had a covering of new snow over a crusty surface which made for fairly good skiing. After several hours on the ridges and bowls above camp, we returned to our cabin, changed into camp clothes, and walked over to the day lodge for the "social hour" which begins more or less at sunset.

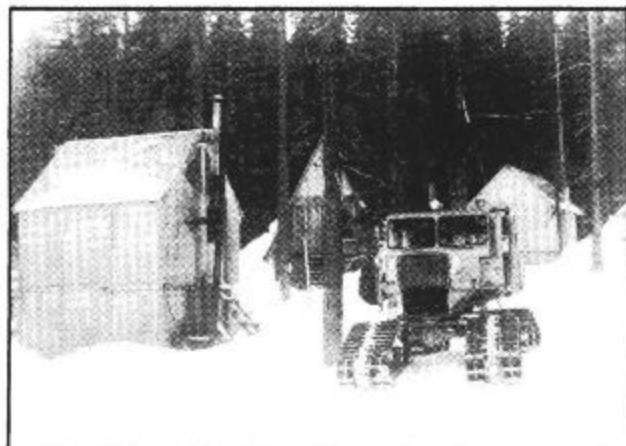
While you can spend time in the day lodge anytime during the day, complimentary snacks and hot drinks are available during this time. It provides a way to visit with others who are staying at the camp.

We usually always meet at least one subscriber during the social hour, and this year we also had the opportunity to get better acquainted with the new owners.

While chatting was nice, and the snacks appreciated, my rumbling stomach told me it was time for dinner, so after a while we went back to the cabin for spaghetti, French bread, a little wine, and reading by lantern light.

The next morning we set out for Lake Julius but were surprised to find the bridge across Roaring Creek gone. Although we could see the tracks of others who had crossed on a collapsed snow bridge, it was more than either of us wanted to try.

Instead, we backtracked to the Summer Trail up McCue Ridge, a well-marked route that climbs steeply to the ridge top—and to views of an approaching storm over the Chiwaukum Mountains.



A grouping of cabins, with Sno-Cat.

Once on the ridge you can continue exploring either direction, or make a loop back to camp. During better weather we would have made a loop out of it. Instead we skied down the ridge a ways, then climbed back up and retraced our tracks as the wind-driven snow engulfed us.

Finally back at camp, we sure appreciated a toasty fire, dry clothes, and warm drinks!

TIME TO SKI DOWN

A three day/two night stay at High Camp is ideal for us, allowing an afternoon of exploring, a full day of ski touring, and a quick morning on the trails around camp before the usually exhilarating ski down the road.

Although you can opt to ride down if you wish, skiing down the 8-mile road is one of the highlights of a stay at High Camp. Except for a short uphill climb, it's mostly downhill and mostly great fun. It can be quite challenging, depending on conditions. If the snow is icy it can be downright difficult.

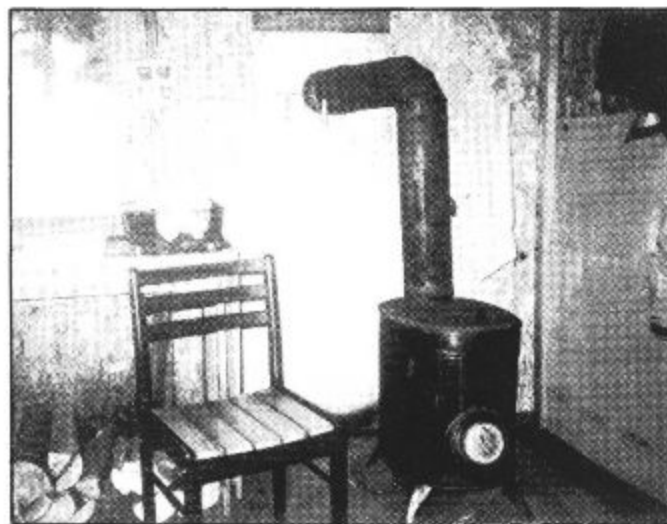
On our last morning, Ann and I packed up our gear, saving only fanny packs for the ski out. Setting aside our gear for Brice to bring down later, we set off for a fast ski down to the car. He passed us on the snowmobile about a mile from the bottom, and when we arrived at the car, our gear was neatly unloaded and ready for us.

We are glad to see High Camp continue. Besides being a fun place for experienced skiers and back-country folks, it makes a wonderful trip for beginners and families to get a taste of winter away from civilization.

Even if you're not a skier you can enjoy snowshoeing, sledding, snowboarding, nature study and photography.

NEW FOR '96

For the current season, the Hansons and



The interior decor—not fancy but functional.

Ann Marshall / Lee McKee

Wells have constructed three new trails, including a re-creation of the old Dipsy Doodle run, for a total of 15 miles of marked ski paths (not counting roads and open slopes). This is back-country skiing, so the trails are natural, not groomed, but they are frequently packed by other skiers.

The cabins have had some new decorating touches and some of them have been insulated, which makes them warmer and easier to heat.

As a special treat for families, on the first weekend of every month during ski season, kids 4 to 12 are absolutely free, and teens are half-price.

Basic rates are \$80 per person for one night (\$110 for two nights) on weekends and holidays. Discounts are available for midweek visits and for groups of at least six adults.

For more information, call 800-909-9916 (western Washington only), or 206-844-2000, or write

High Country Adventures Inc
PO Box 2023
Snohomish WA 98291.

Lee McKee is Pack & Paddle's business manager.

Ann Marshall / Lee McKee

DENNIS LARSON

The YELLOW LINE Club

—HIKING ALL THE TRAILS IN OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK—

Jon Pollack and I met on a Mountaineers outing of the Bailey Range Traverse in 1986. We both had spent a lot of time in the Olympics prior to this, hiking and backpacking.

My first Olympic outings were family trips to the coast and to Hurricane Ridge when I was a kid in the '50s and '60s, and a cross-Olympic backpack with my brother over Anderson Pass in 1970.

Jon started late but hit the ground running. His first trip in the Olympics was to Grand Ridge in 1983, and he never looked back.

Sometime in the next few years, I'm not sure exactly when, we seriously decided to hike all the trails in Olympic National Park. After all, we both had good head starts.

GROUND RULES

But first we had to establish the ground rules. What would we consider a trail? There were bootbeaten tracks like the Cat Creek way-trail. There were abandoned trails like Pyrites Creek, with just remnants remaining.

There were the Bailey Range and Quinault traverses, to test one's mettle and sanity. (I remember one eight-hour stretch from the top of Mount Taylor to Muncaster Basin in particular. Eight hours to do two map miles!)

After much deliberation, we decided to use the map the Park Service hands out to visitors as they enter the Park. If a trail was on this map, we considered it "official"—nature trails and all.

Then we used Custom Correct maps to get an accurate tally—628.3 miles of mountain and coast trails. Along the way and through the years we did lots of routes, scrambles and climbs that were not "official," lots of return trips to places we love, lots of trips to other mountains and other parts of the world (the Cascades, the Rockies, the Alaskan and Canadian arctic, east coast peaks, Europe), but we kept returning to the Olympics.

THE YELLOW LINE

As we plugged away at the trails, we used a yellow highlighter to outline each segment of trail that we completed, and thus the Yellow Line Club was born.

We hiked together or separately, with friends, Mountaineers, or alone, whittling away here and there as our schedules allowed.

This September we finished. And just as we started, we each ended with a different trail. It wasn't done by design, it just worked out that way. Mine was Shi-Shi Beach and Jon's was North Fork Sol Duc.

We haven't equaled Robert Wood's feats by any means, and others may have done the same thing in anonymity. But, still, we're quite proud of what we accomplished. We set a goal that wasn't easy to reach and we did it. And wasn't it fun!

One note of caution, however: Yellow Line Fever has proved to be contagious. My wife Pat is down to 57 miles and will probably join the Yellow Line graduates next year. Kathy K. has a few more miles to go, but with a little encouragement and company on those trails, she'll finish up any year now.

ONE OF OUR FAVORITES

We all agree that one of our favorite Olympic trips was what we call the Five Pass Trip. It was an eleven-day grand loop on the dry side of the Olympics. We did it in mid-August of a better weather year.

Pat and Dennis started up the Dosewallips Valley a day ahead of Jon and Chris, and we all met at Dose Meadows to begin the trip. That afternoon two ambitious party members explored Thousand Acre Meadows, while the lazy two saved the adventure for a future trip. That night we were treated to a display of the aurora. The northern sky shimmered with a wispy curtain of white light moving across it.

The next day we hiked to the first of our five passes—Hayden Pass, 5847 feet. The basin west of and below the pass is a beautiful place, with wildflowers, huckleberries, and grazing bears. We found a secluded bench in the woods above the trail and noted it for a future campsite.

After a short rest at the pass, we scrambled to the top of Mount Fromme, 6655 feet, where we had views of Claywood and beyond, down to Claywood Lake, and across to Thousand Acre Meadows.

Then it was back to the pass and up Sentinel Peak, 6301 feet, with views over to Mount Anderson and the Eel Glacier and Silt Creek. Both peaks are walkups, and they make for a full and satisfying day.

On Day 4 we loaded our packs, heading uphill to pass Number Two—Lost Pass, 5500 feet—and left the crowds behind. This trail is short but steep, gaining 1000 vertical feet in just .8-mile. A short picture session was followed by a scramble of Lost Peak, 6515 feet, by Jon and Chris.

Pat and I took a catnap. The summit climbers reported a bit of exposure near the top but no other problems. We continued across a beautiful basin (definitely requiring a future visit) and on up to Cameron Pass, 6450 feet, Number Three, 3 miles from Dose Meadows.

This is wide open alpine roaming country with a high, cross-country route over to McCartney and Grand Ridge. Very, very tempting, but our business on this trip was doing trails.

We headed down into remote and lonely Cameron Basin. The trail was steep and partially snow-covered. The basin is about a mile long and quite wide. Parts of it were soggy, but other parts had wonderful places to camp.

Unfortunately, we couldn't stay. We dropped out of the basin following a very brushy and overgrown trail that headed down Cameron Creek into the



The Yellow Line Club celebrates at Shi-Shi—left to right: Kathy K., Jon, Dennis and Pat.

forest to the junction with the Grand Pass trail.

We arrived worn out at the end of a long day expecting to find a campsite or two. We found only one. Jon and Chris squeezed in two tents, while Pat and I went down a steep hillside above the junction and basically pitched ours against the trunk of a tree. There are not a lot of choices at this location. Morning couldn't come soon enough.

Pass Number Four was Grand Pass, 6450 feet. The trail up was steep, gaining 2250 feet in 1.7 miles. We had company at the top (most hikers come in from Obstruction Point), but the views make it one of those places you never want to leave.

There was some discussion of scrambling McCartney, but I guess we were feeling lazy. Also, Pat and I did not want to spend another night huddled against our tree, so we decided to move camp down Cameron Creek a couple of miles to a large meadow bordering the creek. The reward was a bath.

That night was clear and cold, and we woke up to frost. No one was willing to crawl out of the tents until the sun hit them late in the morning.

Day 6, we continued down the Cameron in deep forest to its junction with the Graywolf River and Grand Creek. They call this camp Three Forks. We passed the shelter, crossed the river on a log bridge, and made camp. Tent

sites here for an army, but there was only us.

Day 7, on up the Graywolf to the Cedar Lake trail junction and shelter. There were campsites tucked into the trees, a beautiful pool to soak in, a sandy beach to lie on, and we were alone. We pitched the tents and settled in to enjoy a sunny afternoon of wilderness solitude.

It lasted about half an hour. The first mule showed up about 4pm, followed by another and another. Then the horses came. And people. Before we knew it we were surrounded by an Olympic National Park trail crew and all of their support equipment and animals.

Minutes later a hiker and his dog arrived. We all know that Park rules say no pets on the trails. This hiker either didn't know the rules or didn't care, but we all got to see why the rule was there.

The dog and mules and horses all tried to occupy the same space at the same time, with animals rearing and barking and creating chaos. Fortunately the dog and owner chose to continue, hopefully to bump into a ranger farther down the trail.

In the morning we hiked to Cedar Lake and spent the day exploring. It's a deep blue lake in a sub-alpine basin surrounded by steep hillsides. Lots of campers here, more people than we had seen since Dose Meadows.

While we were sitting on a log look-

ing at scenery and bears on one hillside, a pair of cougars slinked behind our backs. Two of the campers got a good show, but when we turned to find them, the cougars were gone—melted into that hillside.

After a second night with the mules we were more than ready to move up the trail. We pitched our tents on a plateau just below Graywolf Pass, 6150 feet, in a grove of sub-alpine trees near a tarn, alone again, and bagged Number Five.

This is a spectacular area with views of mountains everywhere and deer and bear wandering through. We headed cross-country toward Cedar Lake, ending our day on a ridge overlooking the lake trying to spot those elusive cougars. No luck. Along the way, we took the liberty of naming three unnamed tarns after ourselves: Lakes Jon, Dennis and Pat.

August 28th was Dennis' birthday and our 10th day of sunshine. Pat stayed in camp while Jon, Chris, and Dennis walked the ridge from the pass toward Mount Deception. Along the way we flushed out two big bucks.

We ended up way too high on the ridge that connects with Deception. The scree slope that is the scramble route was a good thousand feet below us. Jon and Dennis took a look and called it a day. Chris went on and a few hours later reached the summit solo. The three of us strolled back to camp for dinner and a sorry-looking birthday cake.

We had intended to make this a 12-day trip, but we compressed our last two days into one—the old horse-to-the-barn syndrome. We had already traveled this stretch on the way in. Also, Jon was leaving for Europe in two days and kept muttering something about needing to do laundry. In any case, we just kept trudging.

We arrived at the parking lot with hamburger feet but pleased with the weather, the mountains, and ourselves. This is "yellow-lining" at its best. And as usual, instead of crossing a trip off our list, we simply added more future trips to it. We'll be back.

△

Dennis Larsen lives in Olympia; Jon Pollack in Seattle. Both lead trips for the Mountaineers.

KERRY GILLES

The Wonderful Wallawas

—THE OLYMPIANS VISIT OREGON—

Eagle Cap Wilderness is the largest wilderness in Oregon. The 364,000-acre Wilderness has seventeen peaks up to 9845 feet, 58 lakes, and 1 ice field. The mountains extend 60 miles by 30 miles in the state's northeast corner.

Saturday July 29

Don and I arrived at Wallowa Lake ahead of the rest of the group, so we did the touristy things. The Wallowa Lake Tramway (\$12 each) offers a spectacular 15-minute ride to an elevation of 8200 feet.

This is the steepest vertical lift (3200 feet) for a 4-passenger gondola in North America. The summit of Mount Howard offers over 2 miles of trails, animals, flowers and scenery to enjoy. It was really refreshing, considering I'm scared of heights.

Later that evening we found our group in a horse corral where we parked and slept in the back of our rigs.

Sunday July 30

Everyone woke early, not getting much sleep. We had breakfast on the tailgate of Gordon's rig. Seven 35-pound duffle bags and 16 wood pack boxes were loaded onto seven mules in record time.

Our group headed up the West Fork Wallowa trail for a 9-mile hike into Horseshoe Lake. There were 7 of us, ages 40 to 73, four women, three men. Gordon Cotey was our leader and organizer.

Don and I had the "gotta get there" fever. We thought we were doing pretty good until the pack animals passed us. We took a break and then Gordon passed us. We caught up just as they were unloading.

The spot Gordon had hoped to get was taken but his second choice turned out to be much better anyway. First the kitchen was set up—a big yellow four-wall canvas tent, then an outhouse was set up with blue tarp walls. We gathered firewood, and then set up our own tents.

Don and I went back down the trail to find the rest of our group. We came upon them about 1 mile away, tired, thirsty, dusty, and wondering how much farther. We took their day packs, gave them directions where we were camped and had lemonade waiting for them.

Signs posted "No camping 200 feet from lake" eliminated any clear lake views. That night we had stars, a sliver of a moon, a crackling fire, and the mosquitoes feasted on us.

Monday July 31

We were awakened by a woodpecker, who at 6am every morning told us we were wasting the day in bed. The outhouse was 600 feet (we counted) away, and seemed an eternity to reach.

We walked 1/8-mile to the nearest creek for water as we preferred that to lake water. Our group used 16 gallons a day. Carrying two pails twice a day, my arms felt they had been stretched to my knees.

With breakfast out of the way and lunches made, we were out of camp by 8:30. We picked a loop hike of 8 miles and visited seven lakes. The small blue dragonflies were

busy getting their mosquito breakfast. There were miniature huckleberry bushes everywhere but no sign of a berry. You could feed an army with all the wild onion that's here. We passed lush green meadows with the morning dew still on them.

First we came to Lily Lake, aptly named as the colorful green and yellow plant has taken over. The next one was Lee Lake, a blue pool surrounded by dead trees. Just up the trail is Douglas Lake, circled with Douglas fir.

We passed Crescent Lake with marsh grass growing into it and in 1 1/2 miles came to Sunshine Lake. The hillsides are white granite, making quite a contrast in the reflection. We saw a slab of white rock as big as a football field, and our jaws dropped in disbelief.

At Mirror Lake we ate our lunch. We had a soft breeze, a view of Matterhorn Mountain, patches of snow and the gurgle of water as our ensemble. Half a mile down the trail brought us to beautiful Moccasin Lakes. Back at Douglas Lake we treated our hot feet to a bath.

Tuesday August 1

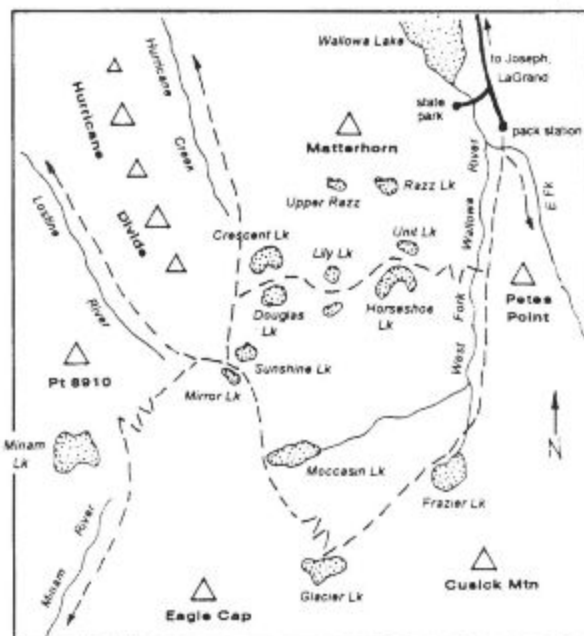
Our destination was Glacier Lake, 5 1/2 miles away. Coming to Moccasin Lakes, we removed our boots to cross the knee-deep creek between the two lakes. As we started climbing toward Glacier Pass we lost the trail several times in large snow patches. After a while we just went straight up, kicking steps in the snow until we reached the pass at 8500 feet.

Down the other side we could see



Kerry at Upper Razz Lake.

Don Abbott





Kerry Gilles

On a day hike, Don walks near the shore of Frazier Lake.

Glacier Lake, large and blue with ice still floating on it, surrounded by green trees and patches of snow brightly lit by the sun.

We were starving, so before our descent we sat and ate lunch, relaxing with the view, and enjoying the happiness we were feeling.

Wanting to get different angles for pictures we wove our way down the hillside. We took the trail around most of the lake, having to cross a bobbing log jam, and stepping softly on the marshy areas. We took a different way back, glissading some and pausing to look at some colorful snags.

Back at camp the sun went behind Matterhorn at 6:30 only to peek around the backside and shine on Sentinel Peak causing a golden alpenglow. Our group has early morning sunrises to enjoy but blinding sunsets to cook by.

Wednesday August 2

We tried going to Unit Lake but the trails here are very poorly marked. After we spent an hour on an old loop, we shook the cobwebs out of our heads and found the correct trailhead. Saw yellow columbine and Indian pipe along with big pond lilies.

We decided to go to Razz Lake about

a mile away and 1000 feet up. Our map didn't show any trail, so we followed the creek up, stopping for waterfall pictures and "aerial" shots of Horseshoe lake. We jumped the creek three times, walked a log, squeezed between big boulders and hauled ourselves up with the tree branches.

After three false summits, three meadows, one deer trail, we shifted ourselves out of "goat gear" and arrived. At once we knew we had got carried away with our "up." We had over-shot our mark and were at "Upper Razz Lake." Exhausted, we ate lunch and froze our feet by sticking them into the glacier-melt lake.

After lunch Don pointed out the real Razz Lake. Dropping 450 feet, we walked around Razz Lake and looked at all the vacant campsites. It looked lonely for such a beautiful place.

Once back at camp we went swimming in a small lagoon about 6 foot deep. Though it was "take-your-breath-away-cold" I was able to stay in for 20 minutes. Don got out after five.

Thursday August 3

Today we hiked back down the West Fork Wallowa to Frazier Lake, a 15-

mile round trip. Because of the heavy horse traffic there were an abundance of flies to deal with. The trail is well graded and easy on the feet.

At Six Mile Meadow Don tried to get some pictures of the many cute ground squirrels, although they didn't want to cooperate. The trail gains 1200 feet in the next 4 miles to Frazier Lake. Past landslides and avalanches have snapped off trees like they were toothpicks.

Wildflowers are everywhere—paintbrush (a different red than ours), yellow columbine, the sky blue forget-me-nots, and hellebore 5 feet tall.

We climbed a bit and were awestruck looking down into the Wallowa River, a solid thundering roar of white foam. Farther up the trail we had to ford the knee-deep stinging-cold treacherous river. Then we had a mile up a rocky, steep trail to Frazier Lake. The subalpine fir tree with its black stand up cones are always a double-take for me.

The lake is in a park-like setting. Cusick Mountain reflected snow patches in the lake, chunks of granite were strewn about, purple elephant head cover were everywhere, along with blue-purple penstemon. The trees hadn't straightened themselves yet from being buried in snow.

We hiked around the lake, jumping several inlets, and sat down for lunch on some boulders. To finish our trip around the lake we had to wade the outlet. Our feet were clean on this hike!

Going back we found a log about 200 yards downstream that we crossed and smiled happily. Passing through the



Kerry Gilles

On the other side we could see Glacier Lake, large and blue with ice still floating in it.

KAREN SYKES

VESPER PEAK

—AN END-OF-SEASON SUMMIT—

Fog and clouds and several Mountaineers showed up for this Mountaineers' Comrades scramble of Vesper Peak at the end of September. Vesper Peak was the first scramble I ever led and that first trip, like today, was in the fog. This time, it was easier.

Fog can add substance to a place—it does take the big views away but it is generous with other gifts of moodiness, silence, and the varying oriental aspects in shifting shades and shapes of black and white. We could almost feel the mountains breathing as we passed through them.

The footlog is better than it used to be—hikers have improved upon the log over the years. Once through the wet forest and across the log we began the switchbacks through what is interminable brush on a hot day. Then we were in the basin, stopping several times to graze the blueberries. A short ways into the basin four ghostly figures and a tent appeared out of the foggy void. The ghostly figures turned out to be cheerful young people, having had breakfast and thinking about climbing up.

We clattered our way over the rocks and followed the cairns to the foot of Headlee Pass. We stopped several times—not just to catch our breath, but to look at the moving landscapes of cliffs and trees as the mist shifted. A bush

with bright red berries sparkled like neon against the quiet gray rocks.

I gave the usual warning about the loose rock as we started up the steep, final switchbacks to Headlee Pass. This narrow pass is a favorite hangout of mine. I could spend hours just sitting watching the place change hour by hour, season by season. Then we were at the top of the pass and in need of food and drink.

We traversed over the loose rocks that rattled like crockery to the outlet of tiny Lake Elan, which, of course, we could not see on such a day but we could hear the running water. All of the subalpine trees were festooned with rainy cobwebs and we wondered where the spiders go on such a day.

We crossed the outlet stream and headed up the boot path that leads to the slabs of Vesper Peak. Would we get a view or not? It was beginning to be doubtful though we could feel the warmth of the sun through the fog and the rocks felt warm.

Met a couple of fellows coming down who were going to climb Sperry. Then they were gone into the gloom and we reached the end of the boot beaten path. Even without the cairns I could find my way to the summit by now, but since it was so foggy and no one else had been there before, we followed the cairns,

admiring the artistic towers some of the cairns had taken. Suddenly we were out of the fog and the sun was hot and we could see the summit of Vesper studded with the bright shirts of sprawled hikers. We walked up the slabs (always fun), and onto the summit.

Some peaks stuck out of the clouds. Del Campo reared up like a dragon and farther off Glacier Peak seemed to shimmer and seethe in a heat wave. In a few moments the fog was back, but the sun still put out enough warmth that we could lie on the rocks and not get chilled. Lunch was slow.

On the way back down we stayed close together. One party member fell behind with leg cramps but Bob Dreisbach, a veteran Mountaineer, treated him with that old-fashioned remedy, salt, which worked.

We came out pretty slow because I wanted to be sure no one got off-route in the fog. Going slow has many rewards, though—summer's last flowers seemed to whisper goodbye to us as we passed through Headlee Pass. Goodbye, gentians. Goodbye, pearly everlasting. Goodbye, asters, goodbye.

△

Karen Sykes, of Seattle, is a frequent contributor to Pack & Paddle and leader of many Mountaineer trips.

The Wonderful Wallowas continued from previous page

meadows I saw scarlet gilia mixed with purple aster and some yellow daisy. A delicate three-petal with a purple dot inside each flower (mariposa tulip) really caught my eye. Wish-puffs the size of your fist were fun to blow into the wind while making a wish. Briar balls attacked our socks if we dared venture too far into the meadow.

Friday August 4

It was my day to stay in camp—KP duty. Don went back to Unit Lake. Lorene took her easel and went off to paint Eagle Cap Mountain.

After staying busy till 12 with

around-the-camp chores I decided with the high humidity it was time to go swimming again. Then I took the binoculars and scanned the hillsides and mountains pretending I was finding a route to the top. Just as I had settled into a good book Don came back into camp with his catch. He then decided to hike around Horseshoe Lake.

Saturday August 5

After a breakfast of French toast and trout, we started taking down camp and packing it in boxes to be loaded on the mules later. We noticed more of the scenery going out at a leisurely pace. A

multitude of flowers had bloomed in that week of sunshine.

We had to step aside countless times for the incoming new people and pack horses. We saw two deer on the trail ahead of us, one with its antlers still in velvet.

It was a wonderful trip. We covered lots of miles and saw lots of country. The Wallowas are a great place to hike.

Getting back to our truck we were greeted with a flat tire!

△

Kerry Gilles, of Westport, is a member of the Olympians and is assistant manager at the Red Apple Market.

BOBBIE SNEAD

THE SWISS ALPS

—A HIKER'S SHANGRI-LA, Part 2—

PART ONE: Last month, Bobbie Snead showed us how to organize a hiking trip to Switzerland, how to get around in the country and what to take. This month, she lets us in on two great areas to visit.

Switzerland has many superb hiking areas. The Alps cover almost two thirds of the country. For the first-time visitor, the overabundance of hiking choices may be a little confusing.

If you were plucked from your home, magically transported and set down almost any place in Switzerland, you would find lots of appealing hiking opportunities. How do you select a few hiking bases out of all the possibilities?

I prefer to visit the quiet, backwater places. The fewer the tourist buses, the better. If a town has a McDonald's, it doesn't fit on my list of potential vacation spots.

As you peruse the travel guides in the bookstores, make a mental note of the Alpine resorts which are repeatedly mentioned. I eschew these tourist meccas for my hiking bases and visit them only on day outings or sightseeing breaks from my hiking days.

Zermatt and Grindelwald are good examples of elbow to elbow crowdedness. Both are outstanding resorts surrounded by world class mountains that, in my estimation, have been spoiled by their popularity.

Fortunately, dozens of other towns and villages still retain their charm and cultural integrity and offer hikers the paradise they've been seeking. The tiny village of Lauenen is just such a place.

THE BERNER OBERLAND

Located in a region on the northern slope of the Alps called the Berner Oberland, Lauenen lies in the kind of lush landscape usually pictured in coffee table books and

holiday calendars.

The Berner Oberland is wetter than other regions in Switzerland. This extra moisture results in a pleasing contrast of gleaming, white peaks and verdant, green slopes.

The Lauenental, or Lauenen Valley runs in a north-south direction. The valley dead-ends at the foot of a mountain wall which includes the Spitzhorn (2807 meters), Arpelstock (3035 meters), Wildhorn (3248 meters) and the Schnidehorn (2937 meters).

These peaks lie at the lower, western end of the backbone of mountains which make up the Berner Oberland. The valley drops away from the mountainous headwall and then cradles the Lauenensee (Lauenen Lake) in a marshy basin.

Several creeks drop into the main watershed from the south, west and east. Hikers can actually penetrate the mountain headwall by following a trail south through the Geltenschuss Gorge into a land of waterfalls and wildflowers. This area is preserved as a nature reserve.

A Swiss Alpine Club hut is situated at the end of this trail and provides good views of the Gelten Glacier. The

ridge on the west side of the Lauenen Valley is low and mostly wooded. The ridge to the east consists of rolling, open country with expansive views and endless meadows. Truttisberg Pass (2038 meters) breaches this eastern ridge.

A TINY VILLAGE

In the center of this serene landscape lies the tiny village. Lauenen is not what you would call a bustling community. The biggest commotion occurs at the end of the day when the small crowd of hikers gathers to catch the afternoon postal bus which takes them down the valley to the larger towns.

Lauenen has two small hotels, a post office, a bus stop, and two tiny ma-and-pa groceries. One of these shops also sells hardware and cowbells and the other sells fresh bread every morning. Lauenen boasts two of the most ornately carved chalets in the region. One of them dates from 1765.

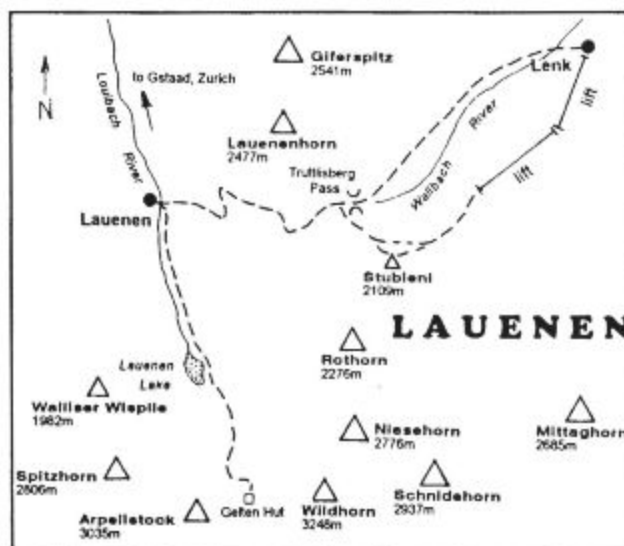
My friends and I enjoyed poking around Lauenen one late afternoon after a day of hiking. We studied the beautiful woodcraft on the chalets, petted the goats in a pen on the main street, admired the new school and sat

by the sixteenth century church surrounded by flowers which had been lovingly tended. This peaceful interlude was the perfect compliment to our earlier high country hiking adventure.

VIVID MEMORIES

Travelers can reach Lauenen by taking the train to the ultra-deluxe resort of Gstaad and then using the postal bus to get to the village. Another option is to travel to Lauenen by foot—a hike you won't soon forget.

Start by taking the train to a spa town called Lenk, which lies in the valley just to the east of Lauenen. Train connections are, as usual,



very simple.

Walk through Lenk and follow the signs to the Betelberg chairlift. Lenk is a very pleasant town in itself. As I meandered through town toward the lift, I watched an elderly woman who walked with two canes as she slowly led a small herd of black sheep to the meadows above the lift. This little encounter was brief but made for a vivid memory. Every time I mentally retrace the hike between Lenk and Lauenen, this lady comes to mind first.

TAKE THE LIFT

Take the Betelberg lift all the way to the top of its run. Purists may balk at the thought of using a lift to start a hike. It is a common practice in Switzerland and cuts out the long slog up from the valley floor, allowing you to be more leisurely as you traverse the high country.

The hike from Leiterli at the top of the Betelberg lift heads southwest on a broad path. Upon reaching a junction near a small peak labeled Stubleni on the map, we took the right branch and headed northwest and then west through a geological wonderland.

Our undulating trail led us through a limestone formation with sinkholes, hillocks, crystals and small rocks that felt as slick as soap. We couldn't decide whether to focus on the immediate landscape of interesting textures and great photo angles or gaze to the south at the powerful presence of the Wildhorn and the Arpelistock.

We had lunch in an immaculate emergency hut and then hiked to



Truttisberg Pass (2038 meters). From this grassy saddle we descended the open slopes and then followed a route on farm roads and wooded paths until we arrived in the center of Lauenen. This hike is about 7 miles long and is a fantastic introduction to the beautiful hiking area around Lauenen.

THE GLARNER ALPS

Elm is another quiet village that would be ideal as a hiking base. It lies across the country from Lauenen in the Glarner Alps of eastern Switzerland. You can travel to Elm by train and then bus connection.

Elm is located in what the Swiss themselves call the hinterland. Few Americans come here. People in this region of Switzerland will study you as though they've never seen an American before. It's quite possible that they have only seen a handful of Americans.

While on an excursion in a town not far from Elm, my friends and I had a

conversation with an American doctor who was living there with her Swiss husband. When we asked her about the curious looks we were receiving from the locals, she explained that Americans don't usually visit this part of the Swiss Alps. I found this aspect of our stay quite refreshing. Even more appealing is Elm's setting.

WALLED IN BY MOUNTAINS

Elm lies about three-fourths of the way up a crescent shaped valley. Because of this geographic configuration, the village appears to be walled in by mountains on all sides.

The mountains here are higher and more imposing than the peaks surrounding Lauenen. The 3158-meter Hausstock and the 3028-meter Voralb dominate the view to the south. Piz Segnas (3099 meters) and Surenstock (3056 meters) rise to the east.

As you stroll the village, a ten-minute jaunt at most, your eyes will be drawn to the jagged wall of peaks straight above you to the southeast. This wall is called the Tschingelhorner and has a very dramatic link with Elm.

As you study this impressive wall, look for a large hole near its northern end. This gap serves as a huge window. On a clear day you can see blue sky through its rocky window frame. It is said that every mid-March and late September, if the clouds cooperate, the rising sun's beams shine directly through this mountain window and fall exactly on the church's steeple in Elm.

PRIZE-WINNING VILLAGE

If you can tear your eyes away from the mountains, you will find much to delight your senses in the village itself. Historic sixteenth and seventeenth century homes, neatly stacked woodpiles, huge kitchen gardens and the picturesque church all add to the tranquil atmosphere.

In 1981, Elm was awarded the Wakker Prize, a Swiss award given to communities who have successfully preserved their architecture and village identity. All around the village, people are busily engaged in the business of farming. You fall asleep and wake up to the smell of newly cut hay. The sound of cowbells is constant. You can



Near Truttisberg Pass.

Bobbie Sneed



Bobbie Snead

Approaching Richetli Pass.

explore this rural environment on the trails and farm tracks in the valley and on the lower mountain slopes.

Elm also has many trails leading to higher elevations. These trails are quite steep so you should be in good shape to fully enjoy them. Trails radiate to four hikers' passes. My friends and I sampled two of these pass routes.

FOO PASS

Our first hike in Elm took us to Foo Pass, northeast of the village. This hike involved an elevation gain of 3000 feet and a round trip of 10 miles.

As with almost all Swiss hikes, we began by following a narrow road out of the village. Switchback after switchback provided us with ever growing views of the valley and its surrounding peaks. We passed farming families cutting hay by hand on impossibly steep slopes.

At about the 2½-mile mark, the road turned into a broad path. We were then traversing an intermittently forested slope high above a tributary valley. When we reached timberline, we found ourselves in a broad glacial cirque directly below the Surestock and neighboring peaks.

We wandered a little higher and then gave into the temptation to just laze in the meadow and admire the tiny, electric blue spring gentian flowers and the waterfalls draining the snowfields above. We didn't make it all the way up to Foo Pass. After a leisurely lunch, we retraced our steps back to Elm.

LINTHAL

There was nothing leisurely at all about our next hike from Elm. Our goal was Lintal, a town 21 kilometers (13 miles) away in the valley to the west of Elm. An elevation gain of 3900 feet would be followed by a 5000 foot descent. This outing was not for the faint hearted.

As I look back at this hike, I remember it being very strenuous and exhausting. It became more of a forced march than a hike. But there is much to recommend about this pass route. The hike as far as Richetli Pass, at nearly 7000 feet high, is superb. In retrospect, I would suggest hiking as far as the pass and then returning to Elm.

Start by taking the bus to the upper reaches of the valley and road's end at Ober Erbs. The trail climbs steadily at first and then traverses around a small valley.

We hiked through a knee-high Alpine salad of green plants, crossed a small creek and then gingerly stepped across a narrow chute of hard snow. Then the trail really gets serious. Short, steep switchbacks lead you to a notch in the ridge. The world seems to fall away on all sides.

Below lies a dreamscape. A large bowl-shaped basin complete with wildflowers and a meandering stream invites you to descend and, in the process, lose some of your hard fought elevation gain.

Richetli Pass is clearly visible across the basin. Haustock (3158 meters) flanks the left side of the pass and Hanenstock (2561 meters) lies on the right side. Spend time as you drop into the lush basin and as you climb up to its western rim and Richetli Pass.

The final few yards require a bit of scrambling. The view to the west will make you forget about the exertion. Ridge after ridge is lined up on the horizon. Much of central Switzerland is visible from here. The trail to Lintal plunges straight down.

The valley to the west is so deep you won't be able to see the bottom from your vantage point. I had a wonderful airy feeling as I ate my lunch there. It is an unforgettable place.

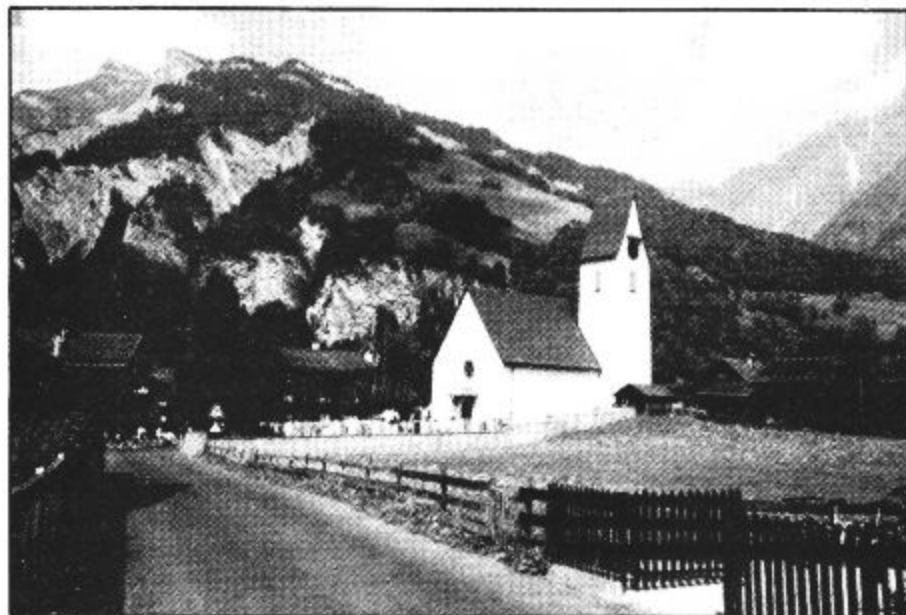
The roundtrip to Richetli Pass and back, using the bus at beginning and end, is 6 miles. By using the bus, you would have plenty of time to slowly savor the beauty of the upper basin and to study the miles and miles of country surrounding you from your perch at Richetli Pass.

A HIKING SHANGRI-LA

For people who are drawn to mountains, Switzerland is truly a hiking Shangri-la. Laucenen and Elm are only two examples of the many peaceful places to be enjoyed in the Alps.

If glaciers, meadows, rock faces and silty streams beckon you, go to Switzerland soon. All you need is a spirit of adventure and an imagination without limits. Your hiking daydreams will become reality.

△



Bobbie Snead

Church in Elm.

Bobbie Snead, of Salem, is a member of the Chemeketans and has been hiking since she was knee-high. She works for Salem-Keizer Public Schools.

MARCUS LIBKIND

Lightweight Tent for Snowcamping

—SLEEPS FOUR AT LESS THAN ONE POUND PER PERSON—

What I'm talking about is a Black Diamond Megamid. It is a four-sided teepee with one center pole, and it has no floor. But don't let this discourage you because it is great for snowcamping.

The Megamid weighs 24 ounces without the pole. Add 4 tent stakes at 2 ounces each and you have 2 pounds even. But it's luxury for two people, designed for three people, and can house four people if done right.

What, you might ask, about a pole? The answer is simple. Leave the one that comes with it at home and use screw-together adjustable avalanche probe poles for the center pole. You need ski poles anyway! In fact, as described below, the pole that comes with the Megamid is not long enough to set up the tent. Also, additional tent stakes are replaced with skis.

The reason that the Megamid is normally limited to three people is that along the edges, as the tent material nears the ground, the headroom approaches zero. The solution to this is to place the Megamid on top of a square pit. The pit has vertical walls and therefore can accommodate four very, very good friends.

There are many refinements that can be made to the above design. I'll try to save you some time by describing them here. One way to create a pit three feet deep is to dig out three feet of snow. Ugh!

An alternative is to cut blocks of snow as you dig the pit and stack them around the periphery of the pit. After you have dug down 1½ feet you have walls three feet high. That's a big savings on energy. For this you will need a couple of shovels, and a snow saw helps. Remember to pack the snow down before you begin digging and wait 10 or 15 minutes if it is not consolidated.

You can enlarge the sleeping area by undercutting the walls. It might not seem like much but

adding half a foot on each side (a foot total to the width) makes a big difference.

Before you start digging your pit you should figure out the dimensions it must be. I have measured it as a function of the length of my skis. That way I can mark the pit out before I start construction.

Megamids can be very stable in moderately strong winds; however, it is difficult to pitch them perfectly so that they shed snow well. When they are pitched on the surface of the snow shedding is nil; it piles up along the sides and collapses them. But with the pit-and-wall technique one can vastly improve on this.

To improve snow shedding follow this suggestion. The edges of the Megamid should reach the outside edge of the walls. Slope the tops of the walls downward and out from the center of the tent. This is easily done with a shovel. When the tent is pitched the slope helps to keep the material angled downward.

Here are a few other tips. Before you leave on your trip, tie tent cord to each corner and pull-out. The Megamid comes with cord, but I recommend

longer ones: 5- or 6-foot lengths so that you can easily tie off to skis.

The Megamid has a zipper for a door. But it is a nuisance to have to step over the wall and down into the pit. Therefore, you will probably want to cut a door in the wall.

This works fine unless snow gets blown in during bad weather. I have solved this problem with a 1-ounce piece of nylon. I have sewn a sleeve along one edge. A ski pole can be threaded through to form a curtain rod and placed across the opening in the wall. Gear can be used to hold down the bottom edge.

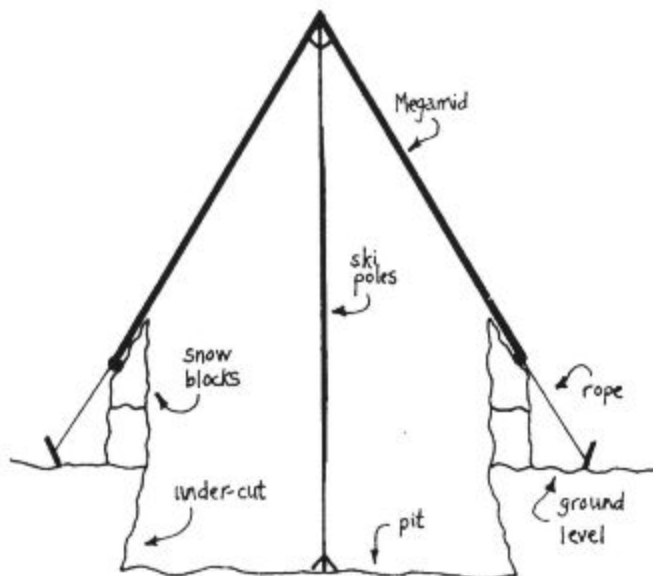
"But it doesn't have a floor," you might be thinking. "Don't I have to bring a ground cloth? That adds weight." The answer is no. An alternative is to carry a ¾-length closed cell foam pad (don't use one of those ridge-type ones; you can't brush the snow off them). Then empty your pack and place it under your feet. This solution only weighs 8 ounces.

Obviously pitching a Megamid as I have described is more time consuming than throwing up a tent. But three people can easily do the job in less than an hour. And there is no charge for the heat you generate.

I enjoy the high ceiling of the Megamid and the fact that 8 to 12 ounces provides me with a home. You can't beat that.

For more tips on going light, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

The Nordic Voice
PO Box 1211
Livermore CA 94551
Happy snow camping.



This article is reprinted courtesy of the Nordic Voice, a Nordic ski conservation organization. For a free subscription, write to the address above.

PANORAMA

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

CRYSTAL SPRINGS—When the Crystal Springs Sno-Park was shut down last winter by the property owner, State Parks had to scramble to find alternative parking for the more than 42,000 winter visitors that used Crystal Springs.

State Parks found three other areas for the winter, and then entered into negotiations with Meridian Minerals to buy the area used for the Sno-Park. This fall the deal went through and State Parks became the owner of 80 acres of old gravel pit which will again be used as the Crystal Springs Sno-Park.

Because of its easy access to the Iron Horse trail, the Sno-Park is used year-round by recreationists of all stripes, including cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, hikers, mountain bikers and horse people.

According to State Parks director Cleve Pinnix, the Sno-Park will eventually be paved and have permanent rest-rooms.

GRAVEL PIT—The EIS for Associated Sand and Gravel's proposed 1338-acre quarry near Granite Falls is inadequate, ruled Snohomish County Hearing Examiner John Galt in an appeal filed by The Mountaineers and the Stillaguamish Citizens' Alliance.

Examiner Galt concluded that the EIS did not sufficiently address the project's adverse environmental impacts, or the impact of the truck traffic on local roads, schools or communities.

The company has already spent \$2 million on the site and is expected to continue to seek approval for the project. If the EIS is rewritten, the parties opposed to it would have to challenge it again to stop the quarry.—*excerpted from The Mountaineers Conservation Newsletter.*

CRYPTOSPORIDIUM—Ever heard of it? It's a protozoan, just like giardia, that is becoming more prevalent.

People who become hosts to cryptosporidium tend to suffer from the same symptoms as those who are hosts to giardia. One difference is that giardia shows up in 10 to 14 days, but "crypto" can get you in as little as 5 days.

The protozoan is 2 to 4 microns, but because it can compress, you need a filter 1 micron or smaller to keep it out of your water supply. Some of the new filters are rated .2 to .4.

Chemicals such as iodine and chlorine, which kill giardia, do nothing to crypto. Boiling is effective, but often not practical.

FIVE PEAKS—Congratulations to three Bellingham climbers—Tom Chisholm, Craig Bruntel and Faron Clymer of Kulshan Mountaineering—who successfully climbed Rainier, Saint Helens, Adams, Glacier and Baker in five days, 15 hours and 38 minutes. The team reached the summit of Mount Baker, their last peak, on September 17.

The expedition called attention to the need for protection of the Cascades and to build support for Cascades International Park and Stewardship Area.

After ascending and descending 37,000 vertical feet, hiking 70 miles, and driving 900 miles between peaks, team leader Chisholm said the climbers were "glad to be finished, a little tired but none the worse for wear."—*excerpted from "Nature Has No Borders," the newsletter of Cascades International Alliance, 1402 3rd Ave, #424, Seattle WA 98101.*

EAGLE TRIP—In winter, eagles congregate on the Skagit River. The North Cascades Institute will spend two day-long sessions on the Upper Skagit studying the behavior and habitat of the bald eagles. Instructor is Libby Mills, a steward of the Bald Eagle Preserve.

Seminars are January 6 (Saturday) and January 21 (Sunday). Cost is \$60.

Call the North Cascades Institute at 360-856-5700 x209 for registration.

SNOWSHOE RACES—Snowshoe racing is exploding in popularity. Sleek, high-tech snowshoes and colorful gear are attracting a new set of participants.

The Northwest Sport Snowshoe Race Series will hold its second race on January 13 at Lake Easton State Park. Registration opens at 10am. Events include a kids' race (13 and under), an obstacle course (14 and up), and a competitive 5km race. Kids's race is free; all others have a \$5 fee.

For more information, contact Swallows' Nest, 206-441-4100.

PLUM CREEK LOGGING—This summer Plum Creek logged just outside the Alpine Lakes Wilderness boundary on Three Queens Mountain and along Mineral Creek. They also logged along the Cooper River trail, in spite of concerns expressed by the Alpine Lakes Protection Society, The Mountaineers, and others.

Although ALPS tried to convince Plum Creek to postpone logging these areas in hopes of a future exchange, the company was unwilling to delay any longer.—*excerpted from "alpine," the ALPS' newsletter.*

BLACK BEARS—In an article in the *Wall Street Journal* by James P. Sterba, we learn that the black bear population in North America is 655,200, roughly. Two-thirds of black bears live in Canada and Alaska. Oregon is home to 25,000 black bears, and Washington has 20,000. A human is killed by a black bear every other year, more or less.

About 40,000 bears are killed by legal hunters each year; another 40,000 by poachers.

WATER TRAILS—The Washington Water Trails Association is going strong. Several sites have been added to the Cascadia Marine Trail throughout its length (Olympia to the San Juans).

In addition, the trail is branching into Hood Canal, with several proposed sites being considered for inclusion.

All the sites need volunteers to develop and maintain them. To combine your paddle trips with volunteering, contact WWTA, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Room 305, Seattle WA 98103 (206-545-9161).

ISSUES

A LISTING OF BACKCOUNTRY ISSUES OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

SNOQUALMIE PASS—A draft EIS for managing federal forest lands in the Snoqualmie Pass area was released at the end of November. Public meetings have already been held, but comments can be received until January 31.

The idea is to provide corridors

for wildlife and eventual acquisition of "checkerboard" lands. For a summary of the Snoqualmie Pass AMA document, contact Cle Elum Ranger District, 803 W 2nd St, Cle Elum WA 98922.

Address comments to Floyd Rogalski at the address above.

REST STOP

EQUIPMENT, RECIPES, TIPS

TRAIL BREAD—Here is my favorite recipe for trail bread:

- 1 cup rye flour
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon caraway seeds
- a little wheat germ

Combine. Using fingertips, rub in 2 tablespoons butter, and 1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel. Combine 1 egg and 1 cup buttermilk and add to dry ingredients. Bake in a 9x9 pan at 425 degrees for 20-25 minutes.

My dog even likes this. I share it with him.—*CF, Bremerton.*

WATERPROOFING—I have had good luck using toothbrushes for many projects. I have used both manual and electric models.

Ever since I waterproofed my teeth and gums, I have no longer used my *personal* toothbrush for waterproofing. Good toothbrushes are seldom found at garage sales.

For waterproofing boots, I have had good luck using Hubbard's applied with a toothbrush.—*Thurston Sydnor, Port Townsend.*

ADDITION TO LIST—The "Winter Phone List" in the December issue left off an important resource for lodging and skiing: the Flying L Ranch.

The 160-acre ranch operates as a country inn. In the winter, you'll find 3 miles of ski trails on the ranch, another 8 or 9 miles close by, and at the Sno-Park up the road on Mount Adams is a network of trails that spread out into the backcountry. Innkeepers (and *P&P* readers) Darvel and Darryl Lloyd will provide you with maps and advice.

For a brochure or reservations, contact the **Flying L, 25 Flying L Lane, Glenwood WA 98619** (509-364-3488).

PEAK-BAGGING SYNDROME—Here are the symptoms so you can tell if you or someone you know has Peak-Bagging Syndrome:

1. **Denial.** The person will often say something like: "I'm not a peak-bagger; I'm merely an avid outdoor person who likes to climb mountains. I can stop at any time." (Don't be fooled.)
2. **The List.** All peak-baggers keep a notebook of some sort which contains The List. The List records successful ascents, along with the date and elevation of each climb.

Typically the peak-bagger will keep

the notebook underneath the mattress or at the bottom of a sock drawer. Consistent with the denial symptom, they rarely refer to it as a "Peak-bagging List." They usually call it a "climbing log."

3. **The Look.** Peak-baggers will usually have a far-off look in their eyes, as though they are scanning the horizon for new climbing goals. They may seem aloof a great deal of the time.

4. **The Walk.** Peak-baggers can sometimes be identified by the deliberate way they walk. They look as though they are hiking along a trail even when they are just headed to the fridge.

The cause of Peak-Bagging Syndrome is not fully understood. Perhaps it is the result of exposure to intoxicating views, physical activity, and/or lack of sufficient oxygen to the brain. There is no known cure.—*by William E. Sheets, from the Internet.*

WIN FAME & ADMIRATION!

Send us your favorite recipes for hiking and paddling; a review of your newest (or oldest) piece of gear; a safety tip; or tell us about modifying or making your own gear.

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Gear Review

PLEASE RELEASE ME!

I was on a club trip last December when I broke my leg high up on a glacier on Rainbow Mountain. The snow was hard-packed and fast and I took a tumble. My leg hurt badly. Thinking my ankle was sprained, we wrapped it heavily in duct tape, put skins on skis and started the slow, careful and painful 7½ hour ski down, 5 hours of this through trees in the dark.

The equipment that caused my grief was my backcountry telemark skis, leather boots and Riva cable bindings with side cable throw. I had upgraded the bindings just 2 years before because I used to tear out the bails on my previous 3-pin bindings. Now the weak point was my ankle.

When I bought my new bindings I didn't even consider getting the release kit for them. I had noticed them only casually in a store and saw them on a friend's skis. I will definitely get a release kit put on my bindings for this season—but should you? Well, here are

some of my findings and you can decide for yourself.

First of all, in the last year since my accident, I have talked to so many people who have blown their knees, twisted their ankles or broken their legs backcountry tele skiing. Many of them have had to give up skiing entirely; some have had to give up many of their former sports. In spite of this, the Mountain Equipment Co-op's position is that release kits for my type of binding are not desirable because of the weight and are not that necessary.

Carlton, on the other hand, strongly recommends getting them for anything more than trail skiing. Voile, makers of a release kit, sell 25% of their bindings with releases, would like to see more people use them, and claim they very greatly reduce the risk of injury.

The downside to the release kit is the weight, extra mechanical complexity, and cost (\$70CDN). When I do long distance trail skiing with my telemark skis, say like 50 or 60km in a day, I am

sure I will curse the extra weight. A small percentage of early Voile releases broke in the extreme cold, but this has been corrected. That is a concern. More spare parts need to be carried. Some complain they release too easily in some conditions. The upside is that you will be less likely to break your leg or sprain your ankle.

Is time off work and activities missed worth only \$70? It is a lot harder to ski with a broken leg than a broken bindings. People skiing on alpine touring boots are lugging twice the weight. Alpine touring boots are of course another option.

For me there is no doubt that backcountry skiing can have risks. I will get a release kit. I will be more careful on my first runs of the season until my legs are stronger. I will take my calcium with magnesium. I will practice my telemarking, because being in control is safer.—*Ben Wiens.*

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL



On Mount Rainier, above Paradise.

FROM THE MAILBOX—"I get a lot of magazines, but *P&P* is the only one for which I'll drop everything."—*Renton*.

"I wish contributors would be more specific about trailhead location. Puck and Ferguson (also yellow) send greetings to Yellow Cat."—*Seattle*.

"I don't know how I missed the new home for all my favorite trail folks, but I'm delighted that I finally came across *P&P*. Please sign me up."—*Seattle*.

"Say hello to Yellow Cat, from Bonatti, Spokane's yellow cat."—*Spokane*.

"My *P&P* copies are all in binders by year and index. My bookcase holds these wonderful trail write-ups—sure helps our trail planning."—*Wenatchee*.

"Hope you get some trip reports this month. I haven't been out for a month and a half. Boo-able weather."—*Bellevue*.

INDEX—Yes, the Index is done. The early birds already have their copies. We have plenty for everyone.

As usual, Lee has separated Paddling and Snow Touring reports into separate references. If you want this information at your fingertips, you'll find these special indexes handy. See the form on page 7 to order your '95 Index.

FRONT PAGE—Jim O'Malley and the folks at High Mountain Rendezvous in Issaquah made the front page of Bellevue's *Journal-American* recently. Jim told me it was their grumbling

about the lack of snow that caught the attention of the *J-A*. Neither the grumbling nor the front page story solved the snow problem, however, until just a few days ago.

"The first day we saw any action was last Saturday," Jim said. "Our rental guy, who is new this year, got a taste of what early-morning rental chaos is like, then two hours later everybody came back wanting refunds because I-90 was closed and they couldn't get up to the pass!"

WINTER PLACES—You'll find information on a variety of special destinations for snow touring in this issue. We've included these Washington areas: Methow Valley, Stehekin, Scottish Lakes, Mount Tahoma Trails and Glenwood (Flying L Ranch).

Look for these reports in the Backcountry News section. We'll continue them through the snow season. Hope you find them helpful.

AVALANCHE DOCUMENTARY—Helicopter ski guide and avalanche expert Eric Burr says to be sure to watch for an Avalanche Documentary on public TV "soon." Eric was able to preview this show and says it is excellent.

If anyone has heard WHEN this will be on, please let me know.

RAIN & STORM—Since the *Pack & Paddle* office is on high ground, we didn't flood. And although we spent a nervous night during the windstorm, our big trees stood their ground. The only casualty was a smashed bird feeder. We've been postponing back-

country trips for over a month because of the weather.

SNOW—It's been a long time coming, but it looks like the mountains finally have snow. We are ready. As soon as this issue goes in the mail, we're heading for the hills!

CAT AND BEAR—Probably most of you saw that cute picture in the paper about the stray cat who made friends with an enormous grizzly bear at a wildlife center in Oregon.

We witnessed a wildlife encounter between Yellow Cat and a passing deer about a year ago: Lee spotted the deer from an upstairs window, and the three of us went out to the porch to watch. Yellow Cat, never having seen a deer before, was very curious. She went down the steps, and down the path to intercept the deer.

The deer was also curious, and the two studied each other for a bit, then got close enough to touch noses before the deer continued on its way.

VOLUME FIVE—No one is more pleased than Lee, Yellow Cat and I that we are beginning Volume 5.

We thank all of you for making it possible and wish you a "mountainous" new year!

See you in the backcountry.

Ann Marshall



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