

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA



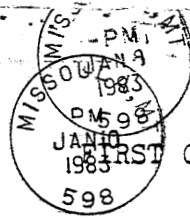
January 1983
Vol. 21 No. 10

January 12, 1983 7:30 PM Meeting

Montana Power Co.
1903 Russell St.

Program :
OUTDOOR COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY
(a condensed workshop)
by JACK TUHOLSKE
Bring your 35 MM camera if you wish

THE MOUNTAIN EAR
P.O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT 59801



CLASS



Dave Line
1135 Whitaker Drive
Missoula, MT 59803

** SCHEDULE OF TRIPS **

Jan 9 Lolo Hot Springs Loop Ski trip by car, skis, and water Car pool with Joe Kipphut to Lolo Hot Springs, then gather into $\frac{1}{2}$ the number of vehicles, drive to Lolo pass, ski down the Lee Creek trail (passing over two ski bridges Joe and his YACC crew built) all the way to Lolo Hot Springs, and then swim the final 20 feet. Meet at IHOP near K-Mart 8am. Leader: Joe Kipphut ph. 721-1564

Jan. 16 Ski backside of Mt. Fujii (Lolo Pass) Meet 8 am K-Mart
Leader; Dan Weinstein

Jan. 23 Moderate ski trip either at Mill Creek or up Ninemile creek, along roads or meadow. Location depends on snow conditions as these are both low elevation areas. Call on Th, Fri, or ~~Sa~~ for details. Leader: Bob Benson 549-1426

Jan 30 Easy trip up Spring Gulch (Rattlesnake) . Meet 9 am at Eastgate shopping center. Leader : Charles Hama ph. 549-

Feb. 5-6 Overnite ski trip up Rattlesnake . Call Rob Holden for more details!
Phone: 543-5545

Feb.12 Telemark turn practice. Location to be set later when snow conditions are more certain. (note: we can also probably con the leader into giving us some pointers -) Leader: Bill Morgan; 363-5339

Feb. 26-27 Lillte St. Joe shelter cabin This is almost always a Stegnous trip
Leader: Bill Morgan 363-5339

Mar. 5-6 Lost Trail ski trip. For those who havent been on this trip in past years, this provides a variety of skiing opportunities - cross country on the Anderson Mt. trail near Chief Jeseeph Pass, downhill at Lost Trail ski area, or ride the lift at the area and X-C down through the Saddle Mt. burn. Accomodations at Lost Trail Lodge are about \$12 per person. Meals at the lodge are additional. Cooking facilities available at the cabins.

NOTE: Reservations must be made by Feb. 2.. Phone Ralph Flockerzi 549-9986

Mar 13 Woods Gulch - Marshall Loop trip. Moderate. Meet East Gate 8 am
Leader : Ralph Klawitter 728-4778

** Recent Trips **

Dec. 12 Just A Spin In a little over an hour we made the circuit through the grand old Ponderosa Pines along the icy river and around the golden stubblefield. A "quickie" cross-country skiing area has been discovered! And it is the newly developed public access to historic Council Grove out Mullan Rd. Seven Mountaineers and guests opted to try that spot rather than risk the scratchy conditions at Pattee Canyon. The 4" of snow was just enough cover to make smooth going in old vehicle tracks. Participants were guests Lois Crepeau, Sue Monroe, and Mike Welch who puttered along with Alice Austin, Allison Easterling, Charles Hama, and Virginia Vincent. This place would really lend itself to a moonlight tour!

ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP LIST
JANUARY, 1983

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The Nordic Ski Patrol

First Aid in the Winter Wilderness

by Stan Bradshaw

For months the woman had planned a solo ski tour into the rugged Taylor Fork area south of Bozeman, 100 square miles of snow-covered wilderness. When she finally set off into the mountains, she told her friends to expect her back in five to seven days. Eight days passed and still she did not return. Alarmed, her friends notified local search and rescue authorities. Searchers with snowmobiles quickly deployed into the area, only to become mired in several feet of fresh snow which had been deposited by heavy storms earlier in the week.

Unable to continue the search on snowmobiles, the authorities called in the Nordic Ski Patrol. Light and mobile in the heaviest of snows, the Patrollers quickly penetrated deep into the Taylor Fork area and found the woman's poles. The deep snows, however, had obscured all other signs of her. Search dogs found her several weeks later, dead of exposure.

On one level, this tragedy, reenacted with increasing frequency each year in Montana, represents a fundamental problem caused by the exploding popularity of Nordic skiing. The resurgent interest in Nordic skiing has resulted in an unprecedented deluge of people into Montana's woods and mountains during the harshest and most unpredictable of seasons in Montana. Winter, bitter at its worst, and at all times capricious, is unforgiving of the ignorant and careless.

On another plane, this incident highlighted the contributions of a relatively new entry into the field of winter safety and search and rescue — the Nordic Ski Patrol. Gallatin County Sheriff John Onstad was impressed by the performance of the Nordic Patrol on the Taylor Fork search. "They responded well, were ready to go at a moment's notice, and were able to move into the area when our snowmobiles could not. I think they will be a real asset to winter search and rescue in this area."

The Nordic Patrol has its origins in the National Ski Patrol System, an organization long recognized for its contributions to skiing safety and winter first aid at downhill ski

areas throughout the country. In 1970, as interest in Nordic skiing began to blossom in the eastern United States, the National Ski Patrol System recognized that Nordic skiing presented problems entirely different than those found at downhill areas.

While the Nordic and Alpine Patrols share similar training in advanced first aid and in winter evacuation, the resemblance ends there. The Alpine Patrol, confined to specific areas of heavy, highly concentrated use, places its emphasis on extensive coverage of the area in order to provide prompt first aid and evacuation where it is needed.

On the other hand, the very character of Nordic skiing defies the Alpine approach. Nordic skiers can be found almost anywhere at any particular time during the winter, and the Nordic Patrol cannot possibly cover all the areas that Nordic travelers might use.

Consequently, the Nordic Patrol concentrates its efforts on accident prevention by educating skiers on everything from the availability of basic ski instruction by qualified instructors to waxing techniques and emergency winter survival. Gary Hall, the Northern Region Advisor for the Nordic Patrol, characterizes their efforts this way: "Ideally, we would like to work our way out of a job, but that doesn't look like it is going to happen soon."

Given the limitations of trying to reach everybody who might need the instruction the Patrol offers, it extends its endeavors to several other fronts including skiing with first aid and emergency equipment, patrolling Nordic ski races, and accompanying ski touring groups to provide repairs, assistance, and first aid on the trail.

To fulfill these diverse obligations, Nordic Patrollers go through extensive first-aid instruction and training emphasizing winter survival, orienteering, avalanche training, ski mountaineering, emergency evacuation and the construction of emergency shelters. The focus of this training is on emergency survival. The virtue of this approach is well founded, as illustrated by an incident which occurred in Wyoming a number of years ago, when two skiers were caught out after dark in bitter sub-zero temperatures even further reduced by wind chill factors down to 60 degrees below zero. The cold paralyzed all efforts to start a search that night. Fortunately, the skiers knew the basic concepts of emergency survival. They constructed a snow cave and were able to survive the night in good form. Any other course of action would have meant almost certain death by hypothermia.

The problems most often encountered by the Nordic Ski Patrol arise from lack of planning and preparation. Gary Hall emphasizes that Nordic skiers can eliminate many dangers of back country travel by adhering faithfully to a few common sense practices:

1. Carry adequate food, clothing, fire starters, repair kit, and shelter to stay overnight should the need arise.
2. Never travel alone.
3. Always tell someone where you are going, when you expect to return, and let them know when you have returned.
4. Make sure your party is adequately equipped to handle any emergency.

As Nordic skiing has grown in Montana, so has the Nordic Patrol. Currently there are Nordic Patrols in Essex (Kalispell), Missoula, Helena, Bozeman, Billings and West Yellowstone. In addition, skiers in Anaconda, Seeley Lake, Dillon, Gardiner, Great Falls and Hamilton have expressed interest in forming Nordic Patrols.

Persons interested in joining the Nordic Ski Patrol or in having one formed in their community may get more information from Gary Hall, P.O. Box 1127, Hamilton, Montana.

Suggested Nordic Day Pack

While everyone has specific likes and dislikes in the outfitting of a Nordic day pack — preferences in food and drink are especially divergent — the Nordic Ski Patrol recommends that the following items be carried, as a minimum, in any day pack:

Candle
Canteen or water bottle
Cup
Chap stick
Climbing skins or rope climbers
Compass
Face mask or balaclava
First aid kit
Repair kit:

spare tip, screwdriver, pliers, wrench, rope, pole basket, wire, duct tape, screws, and assorted parts
Head lamp or flashlight with spare batteries and bulb
Sunglasses
Extra socks
Stove and fuel

Toilet paper
Plastic whistle
Lunch and extra food
Map of the area
Matches in waterproof case
Mittens
Pocketknife
Windproof parka
Space blanket or light tarp

