



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

MARCH 1984

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MARCH MEETING: Wednesday, March 14 at 7:00 p.m. (note earlier time)
at CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY (note location)

PROGRAM: Art Anderson, bicycle shop owner, Stuart Crock, Bikecentennial tour leader, and Joe Kipphut, Forestry Department graduate student, will present an informative program on MOUNTAIN BIKING. Topics will include equipment selection, potential tours, and rules of off-road use.

The Mountain Ear
P.O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT 59806



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Dave Line
1135 Whitaker Drive
Missoula, MT 59803

TRIP REPORTS

LITTLE ST. JOE February 11-13

Six hardy souls staged their own winter olympics at the Little St. Joe cabin February 11-13. Events included an endurance climb up the south ridge, a telemark tourney in the north bowl, a crash-and-burn bushwack between the cabin and the trailhead, and a Canadian Club contest in the cabin. The cabin was in its usual good shape. The firewood's holding out well, although the cabin register indicates that there's been about one group there every weekend. There's less snow than usual, but plenty to ski on. Conditions were icy on Saturday, with roughly 12 inches of new snow by Monday.

Ethel asked me to make a few remarks about Little St. Joe for those who have not made this trip. The cabin is presently mostly used by hardcore telemarkers but there's no reason that novice skiers couldn't also take advantage of it. I definitely recommend climbers to get to and from the cabin, especially from. Put the climbers on, and walk down to the trailhead. Then you can take them off and ski the road back down to your car. It doesn't take any particular skill to walk with climbers on. Rope climbers are inexpensive, and very easy to make.

The cabin is hard to find. There's no real trail to it, and it's quite unobtrusive. So for your first time there, go with someone who's been there before. They can introduce you to the mountain, too. Little St. Joe is a great ski. The north bowl is open and not particularly steep. There's a real fine view from the top.


March and April can be the best time of year for ski mountaineering. The snow is usually good in the high country then and you're not likely to run into extremely cold weather. Take your sunglasses.

--Don Baty

LOLO PASS February 18

Only Jim Burns and Mary Jane Robinson went on the trip to Lolo. We skied a six-mile loop and watched some ski races. We exchanged unique humor with Ranger Pete and Rangers Jay and Jeff. Upon arriving back in Missoula we enjoyed some of Major Gene's scrumptious fried chicken (Double Front). Mama Fuji and Baby Fuji were in good shape. We also went to Lolo Hot Springs to soak up the aching joints.

--Jim Burns



**BRAXTON
BIKE SHOP**

2100 South Ave W.
549-2513

ATTENTION CYCLISTS!

**4th Annual Spring
"CYCLE-OFF" SALE**


Wednesday - April 4 thru Saturday - April 7
10:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

HOMEMADE
COOKIES
COFFEE
PUNCH

REGISTER FOR
FREE
CANNONDALE
BICYCLE
\$595.00 Value

20% OFF
REPAIRS
Brought In
During Sale

**20% OFF MOST ITEMS -
ALL NAME BRANDS**



MISSION MOUNTAINS - February 25-26

Five of us skied up the road to the Mission Mountain Wilderness boundary to begin a trip to the main fork of Cold Creek. We drove up the road about three miles, but at 4,000 feet the snow was too deep to drive and we skied four miles to the end of the road and the wilderness boundary. The skiing was fast on the snow-machine track but that ended after three miles. As we gained elevation breaking trail became slower and more difficult in very deep, fresh snow. It snowed off and on Saturday and Saturday night. Three miles beyond the end of the road, where the creek was bounded by mountains on each side, we set up camp at the head of the valley. From here Cold Creek divided, rising very abruptly to the west and another valley rising to the north. After lunch we skied up the west drainage where there were numerous cliffs and ice flow on both sides with a stream down the center. Because of the steepness and the depth of the snow, progress was slow and we did not make it to the cirque and Alpine Lake above.

After climbing for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours we turned around and skied down in soft snow which allowed some turns although the stream's ten-foot-high snow banks offered some obstacles. Skiing down was much faster and more fun than skiing up, and after getting back down we made a few practice runs on a slope near the tent. We quit skiing just before dark, fixed supper, and stayed quite warm in the mountaineers' tent. We left the fly home to save weight, and for five people, it made for little per-person weight.

The following morning we boiled water for tea and coffee, ate breakfast, and Dan, Wayne, and Terry went up the other drainage. Breaking trail was much easier Sunday and we passed through a very scenic valley which rose moderately at first and then steeply. As we continued skiing, we kept on thinking the next rise was the top of the pass. About three hours later we saw the final ridge at 7500 feet and skied up it. From here we could see upper Cold Lake 1800 feet below on the other side of the pass and the cirque we failed to reach on Saturday. The scenery on the trip up was spectacular, and by the time we reached the top of the pass, the weather had cleared off.

The run down was outstanding, with deep, soft powder. The slopes were often very steep, comparable to the slopes on Snow Bowl, and some of them may have been steeper. But due to the soft powder, we were able to cut a lot of nice turns and had a great time skiing back to camp. After lunch we broke camp and skied out. Because we had broken the trail, we had an excellent ski out, with beautiful views. By the time we skied out, the weather was bright and sunny and we could finally see the beauty of the area.

The people who went were Wayne Hecker, Terry Jones, Mark, Rachel, and Dan Weinstein. We made it back to the car about 6 p.m. Sunday.

-- Dan Weinstein

LOST TRAIL - March 3-4

Waking up Saturday morning to an inch or less of fresh snow in Missoula put the 21 people who met at K-Mart's parking lot into the mood for the real thing at Lost Trail.-- six to eight inches of beautiful, perfect powder. That same snow made less-than-perfect driving conditions, however, and a pile-up or two (traffic, that is) delayed the anxious group so that they didn't make it up to the ski area until 11:00 a.m. or so. Meanwhile, Bill Morgan, Devvi Erickson, Jerry Kogan, and Sherry Beyer had driven up from the Hamilton area and had managed to get to the good skiing ahead of the traffic jam. One group decided to take off from the lodge area instead: Allison Easterling, Andy Graybeal, Lyda Kontz, Mary Ambrose, Doris Pullen, and Ethel MacDonald followed a snow-machine track for a mile or so and then broke fresh trail up a very beautiful road. When it became obvious that they weren't on a loop after all and that the road was becoming impassable under downed logs, they turned back and had a most pleasant ski downhill. They explored another trail, which also appeared not to be a loop after all, and then rejoined Jean Doerr, who had enjoyed herself by walking and becoming familiar with her new downhill equipment. After a swim, hot tub, or both, the women began thinking about starting dinner.

(cont. next page)

