



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

March, 1989

MONTHLY MEETING

Time and Place: 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 8, 1989, in the Montana Power Building at 1903 Russell Street in Missoula.

Program: Dave Pengelly will show slides from trips that he and other members of the Club have taken to Mount Robson and Mount Assiniboine in Canada, and Peter Dayton will show slides from the Club's climb of Tweedy Peak in the East Pioneers in February. In addition, Peter Crego will give a brief summary of the first aid training programs offered by the Red Cross and tell us how we can customise them for our kinds of activities.

TRIP CALENDAR

Sat-Sun, March 11-12, Little St. Joe Cabin. Ski trip to the club's rustic cabin on Little Saint Joe Peak near Stevensville in the Bitterroot Mountains. Good telemarking opportunities abound on the slopes above the cabin; the less said about the slopes below the cabin the better (but bring ropes for your skis). Call Ralph Flockerzi, 549-9986, for details.

Saturday, March 18: Day ski trip, location and nature to be determined by weather, snow conditions, and the interests of participants. Call Ralph Flockerzi, 549-9986, for details.

Saturday, March 25, Lolo Pass Area: Ski trip on the Lee Ridge Trail in the Lolo Pass Area. Call Joe Kipput, 721-1564, for details.

Thurs-Sun, March 23-26, Selkirk Mountains: Ski trip to the Creston Nordic Club's large cabin in the Selkirk Mountains in British Columbia, about 80 miles north of Sand Point. Access is easy, as the cabin is only about 800 feet in altitude above a major road, and the area usually has good backcountry snow conditions, with copious amounts of stable snow. Excellent telemarking and touring opportunities are available from the cabin. Call Dan Weinstein, 549-6844, for details.

Saturday, April 1, Gash Point. Moderately strenuous ski trip up Gash Point, near Victor in the Bitterroot Mountains. Good telemarking in open trees. Call Dan Weinstein, 549-6844, for details.

Second Half of April, Jackson Peak. Three day ski and climb of Jackson Peak in Glacier National Park. Call Art Gidel, 543-6352, for details.

Second Half of April, North Trapper Peak. Two day ski and climb of North Trapper Peak, which is Southwest of Darby in the Bitterroot Mountains. Call Art Gidel, 543-6352, for details.

Mount Cleveland. Steve Niday is no longer interested in attempting Mount Stimson in Glacier Park (see the newspaper article quoted in the Trip Reports section), but is still interested in trying Mount Cleveland. Persons not daunted by the notion of attempting a first winter ascent are urged to contact Steve at 721-3790.

TRIP REPORTS

Mount Stimson, February 13: On March 2, 1989, the Hungry Horse News reported that "Three mountaineers made the first winter ascent of Glacier National Park's second highest mountain last month. John Head, Lane Johnson, and Marty Loefflad reached the 10,142 foot summit of Mount Stimpson on February 13th. It was the sixth winter attempt on the peak in the past two years, but this climbing trip used a different route than the others - the east face - and had ideal weather conditions. 'Many other strong parties have tried it before, but we got lucky and had just the right conditions,' Head said. Head and Loefflad live in Moscow, Idaho, and Johnson is from Whitefish. All are experienced winter mountaineers."

Gap Loop, February 18: Nancy Braun, Wayne Hecker, Bret Doucette, ski skater Dan Weinstein, and Ralph Flockerzi enjoyed a nice trip around Gap Loop on about half an inch of new powder on a well packed road. We saw one moose and returned to the visitor's center at about 2:30 for a cup of hot chocolate and a nice visit with Lois Crepeau. - Ralph Flockerzi.

Tweedy Peak, February 11-12. On Friday evening, February 10, Al Sillars, Bill Cunningham, and Peter Dayton drove down to Dillon and bivouaced in the Sacajewea Motel. The next day we drove out to Birch Creek, which is on the East side of the East Pioneers, and headed in towards Tweedy Peak, which at 10,154 feet is the highest mountain in the East Pioneer Mountains. Since an extended period of cold and dry weather was just ending, we expected lousy snow conditions and cold weather. However, we were pleased to encounter moderate temperatures and ankle-deep new snow. We climbed the mountain via Barb Lake, which is in a cirque on the East Side of the mountain, at the base of a fairly low-angle slope which leads to the summit. The easiest way to get to Barb Lake in the winter is to go to Bond Lake, and then follow an irrigation canal from the Bond Creek drainage over into the Barb Creek drainage. This canal is about ten feet wide, with head-high embankments on either side, and for skiing purposes is dead flat and real boring. However, it beats bushwacking, plenty of which is available further up Barb Creek. Above the canal we were slowed by downfall and boulders, and decided to camp in a meadow a few hundred feet below Barb Lake. After dark, Bill and I skied up to the lake by moonlight. It was completely clear, and the scenery was spectacular. On Sunday the weather was clear and sunny, and all three of us furiously snapped pictures of each other and everything else in sight. Above the lake the snow was windblown and rocks were exposed, so after a few hundred feet we dumped our skis and hiked to the top. I saw a herd of twenty mountain goats on the plateau to the south of the peak. After lolling on the summit for a while we headed back, packed up our camp, and left for the car. Due to a leisurely start in the morning, a slow climb, and more bushwacking on the way down, we didn't reach the canal until it was getting dark. At that point we were home free, as we could hardly stray off the route, but it was 9:00 p.m., about two hours after dark, before we got back to the car. This is a very scenic trip, and the route probably involves little avalanche danger under most conditions. However, do not underestimate the length of time it will take to get to Barb Lake; you would have to move right along to do this as a day trip. - Peter Dayton.

March 4, Warren Peak: On Friday evening, March 3, Art Gidel, Ralph Flockerzi, Dave Pengelly, Ken Moe, and Peter Dayton assembled at the Burg Motel in Phillipsburg for a

trip to Warren Peak in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness Area. We climbed the mountain from the North via Moose Lake, Porter Ridge and the mountain's open, rocky, and relatively gentle south-west face. This is about a twenty-mile round trip, but the altitude gain is only about 4,200 feet, and much of the ascent is pretty gradual. The road to Moose Lake is allegedly kept open year round, as there are a number of houses at the lake, but it was not plowed when we were there, and we could not have made it to the lake without four-wheel drive. It was very cold when we left the car, probably fifteen or twenty below zero. However, it was also clear and sunny, so the weather quickly became warm and pleasant. From the lake we headed up the Carpp Creek drainage, and then climbed south up onto Porter Ridge. On this north slope we encountered some really wretched downfalls, but once on top of the ridge the slope became very gradual, the trees opened up, and we got into some bona-fide scenery. The south end of Porter Ridge meets the west ridge of Warren Peak above Edith Lake. At this intersection we found that the wind and snow had exposed rocks on all the south-facing slopes, so we dumped our skis and hiked to the top. After reaching the top we immediately charged back down the ridge, and after some hair-raising close-quarters telemarking were able to get to the bottom of the deadfalls before dark. We got back to the cars about forty-five minutes after dark, after some easy skiing on wide trails and roads. I had a headlamp, but didn't bother putting it on.

Any winter trip into Warren Peak will be a grunt due to the distance involved, although the amount of skiing could be reduced by snowmobiling up the road beyond Moose Lake for a couple of miles. The Porter Ridge route is acceptable but not all that great; the top of the ridge is too gradual for good telemarking, the slopes above Edith Lake are quite steep and would present a serious avalanche hazard if the rocks were covered with snow, and I would also definitely look for a route up onto the ridge with less deadfalls unless you are trying to earn your bushwacking merit badge. The next time I do this climb I think I will try it via Edith Lake. I noted during a summer trip that there are some fairly steep and open slopes below the lake, but the slopes above the lake on the middle of the face are much more gentle than some of those which we encountered. I'm sure I'll go back; the scenery is great. - Peter Dayton.

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11/89

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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Check one: Individual (\$6.00/year) _____ Family (\$8.00/year) _____

Mail a Check payable to
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