



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

OCTOBER, 1995

MEETING

Meetings: Club meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the Missoula County Commission's meeting room, which is located on the second floor of the annex (newer portion) of the Missoula County Courthouse. Please enter through the north door. The September meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 11.

Program. Have you used up all of your vacation time? Do you dislike getting sand in your shorts? Are you unwilling to wait nine years for a permit? If so, you will probably never float the Grand Canyon. But don't despair; you can obtain virtually the same experience without sustaining a sunburn by attending the October meeting, at which Peter Dayton will give a slide show on a 15 day, 226 mile, raft and kayak trip which he took down the Grand Canyon in April of 1995 with Dave, Marilyn, Cory, and Justin Ryan, Colleen Hunter, Bill Burnett, Joyce McDonough, Tom Bell, Wayne Hecker, Pat Ulik, and Terry Jones. After attending the slide show, if anybody ever asks you whether there are rocks in the Grand Canyon, you will know the answer.

CALENDAR

October 14. Saturday. Heavenly Twins. Climb the Heavenly Twins (9282 feet), which are the majestic twin peaks to the west of St. Mary's Peak in the Bitterroots. The route will follow a trail for about 3 miles, then go cross country through some beautiful alpine terrain. Most of the route is a hike/scramble, but a small amount of fourth-class climbing is required just below the peak. This will be a long and strenuous trip, but with minimal bushwhacking. If conditions are not suitable, another destination will be substituted. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

October 22. Sunday. Hunting Season. If you just moved here from France, or are otherwise out of touch with local events, the big game hunting season starts on Sunday, October 22. Between that date and the end of the Thanksgiving weekend, the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks recommends that you keep your pets indoors, avoid brown or grey clothing, and wear at least 200 square inches of blaze orange whenever you go outside. Good luck.

October 22. Sunday. Trapper Peak. Hike to Trapper Peak (10,157 feet), the highest peak in the Bitterroots, which is located southwest of Darby. The route normally follows a well-maintained trail, but there will probably be a few inches of snow near the summit, making the hike more interesting. This is the first day of hunting season, so be sure to wear orange, although there probably won't be many hunters up on the ridge leading to the peak. This six mile hike with about 3800 feet of elevation gain will be a moderately strenuous trip. Call Matt Grandy at 7238-0647 for more information.

October 28. Saturday. Gray Wolf. Climb Gray Wolf Peak (9001 feet) which is located in the Mission Mountains east of Arlee, and is a most interesting climb. The route follows a trail most of the way. The climb will involve quite a bit of fourth-class climbing, probably with some snow in cracks and on ledges. Gray Wolf and the surrounding peaks should be quite beautiful, dusted with the first snow of the season. This will be a long and strenuous trip. If conditions are not suitable, another trip will be substituted. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

November 4. Saturday. Boulder Point or Peak. Hike to the Boulder Point Lookout (7753 feet) or scramble to Boulder Peak (9804 feet) from the trailhead at 5200 feet. Boulder Peak is located south of Trapper Peak in the Bitterroots. The three mile hike to the lookout is along a well-maintained trail and should be quite pleasant. From the lookout, the route is all off-trail to Boulder Peak, with a moderate amount of bushwhacking and some scrambling or climbing required. The trip to the peak will be long and strenuous. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

Wanna lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, contact Gerald Olbu at 549-4769.

TRIP REPORTS

Glacier Park, September 16-18. Due to job responsibilities, Gerald Olbu, Steve Turnbaugh, and myself, Steve Schombel, left for Glacier on Saturday (rather than Friday), planning to backpack to Gunsight Lake, attempt Mt. Jackson, and hike out Monday. Upon our arrival at Apgar, we found that the campground at Jackson Lake was full that night, so after a breakfast conference, we agreed to hike in on Sunday. Since Steve had

never been to Glacier, we spent a pleasant Saturday doing the car tourist thing. On Sunday at about 11:00 we managed to get on the trail for a slow, easy, and very scenic backpack to the lake. During the night it started to rain, and the climbing day dawned cold and wet with all the peaks fogged in. Gerald was the smart one; he stayed in the tent. I would have too, except Steve was up and ready to go. We decided to wait a few hours to see if the weather might clear. Around 10:00 it started to snow seriously, so we three, along with everyone else in the campground, agreed to slog out to the highway. Actually, we all had clothing for cool wet weather, so the hike through the snow wasn't too bad. When we got to the car we discovered that Logan Pass was closed, so we had to drive through Browning to get home. But we shared some good bear stories and talked about exciting new places to ski this winter. Ah, Glacier surprises me every time I go up there. - Steve Schombel.

Grand Teton, September 23-25. Reports from the Jenny Lake Ranger Station about conditions on the Grand Teton were not encouraging. A recent storm dumped a lot of snow and ice on the mountain, especially on the Owen-Spalding Route on the north side of the mountain. No one had climbed the Grand since the storm, so the ranger didn't really know for sure how much snow and ice was on the route. Never-the-less, Martin Oleksiewicz, Torban Storgaard, and Gerald Olbu decided to see for ourselves. Martin and Torban are from Denmark and work at the Rocky Mountain Lab in Hamilton. Martin is an experienced alpine climber, and has climbed quite a bit in Norway and the French Alps. When we arrived at the ranger station we received conflicting reports. Some people said there was too much snow and ice to climb. Others said conditions were just fine, even though they didn't know of anybody who had been up there. All we knew for sure was that it was cold. The clear blue sky was nice, but it also brought below freezing temperatures. The hike up to our camp at the Lower Saddle was a real grunt. On Monday morning we began the climb. The route took us up the large couloir on the south side of the mountain. The crux of this portion of the climb was to climb over the central rib to the other side of the couloir. Normally, this is a somewhat complicated route that culminates in a place where you have to crawl through a hole between rocks which is called "threading the eye of the needle." With the snow and ice, we speculated that the usual route might not be the best route, especially since tracks in the snow went in another direction. We followed the tracks and found it to be a pretty good route. There was only one exposed place. We continued and reached the Upper Saddle fairly quickly. Views of the 2000-foot north face were quite impressive, especially looking down the Black Ice Couloir. Now, the serious climbing began. We traversed along a narrow ledge toward the north side of the mountain with the 2000-foot face below us. In one place, we had to crawl on our hands and knees because the overhanging rock above only allowed a two-foot gap. At the same time the ledge was only about a foot wide, so one leg would hang over the edge of the 2000-foot cliff. Next, we came to the chimneys. The first chimney was extremely difficult. It required a very strenuous pull-up onto an overhanging rock, and it was not possible to use your feet. This is where we roped up. The next couple of chimneys were not as difficult, but still exposed. We reached the platform, which is a prominent wide ledge on the northwest side of the mountain. We thought it would be great if we could avoid more snow and ice filled chimneys on the usual route, so we traversed along the platform to the southwest ridge. No luck, a 50-foot blank cliff face separated us from the summit ridge. We went back to the ice-filled chimney. At this point, we recalled that we had agreed to turn around at this time. The main obstacle for the descent is the 120-foot Owen Rappel with an overhang at the bottom. It was suspenseful, but fun. The trip down the couloir was straight forward, and for the first time that day we were in the sunshine. We got back to camp quite early, and there was enough time for Martin and Torban to hike out and drive back to Hamilton. Gerald stayed the night and hiked out the next day. Overall, this was a very fine alpine climb featuring cold, snow, ice, and rocks, but all in quite manageable quantities. Gerald Olbu.

OFFICERS

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Mail a check payable to
"Rocky Mountaineers" to

Dave Pengelly
P.O. Box 4262

Check one: Individual (\$6.00/year) _____ Family (\$8.00/year) _____ (9398)

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(STAMP)

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