

MOUNTAIN EAR

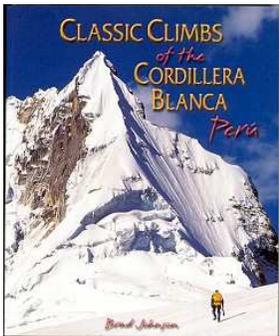
Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers
February, 2005 Missoula, Montana

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club organized to promote all types of recreational use of mountainous areas.



**Monthly Meeting: Wednesday, Feb. 9th,
7:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering,
129 West Front Street, Missoula, MT.**

Brad Johnson Presents Peru



Brad Johnson has been a trip leader and mountain guide for over 20 years. In all, he has over 35 years of experience climbing around the world. He first climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro at the age of 14 and in the years to follow he has climbed and guided in Alaska, Europe, Peru, Ecuador, Nepal, New Zealand, China and Africa. He has been on 17 major expeditions, two of which were to Mt. Makalu in Nepal (the world's 5th highest peak at 27,826ft.) in 1989 and 1992; and once to K2 (the world's 2nd highest peak at 28,250ft.) in China in 1994. More recently, Brad summited Cho Oyu (the world's 6th highest peak at 26,910ft.) with the Shared Summits expedition in September 1999. His photos have appeared in such magazines as *Rock and Ice*, *Climbing*, *Powder*, *Outside*, *Men's Health* and *Backpacker*. Brad has also authored a superb guidebook, entitled "*Classic Climbs of the Cordillera Blanca, Peru*", which has been receiving rave reviews.

Visit his website for more info:
<http://www.peaksandplaces.com/>

This should be a great show, so come early and pick up a signed copy of Brad's book.

Mountaineering class

Jim Wilson, mountaineer extraordinaire, owner of Pipestone Mountaineering, father, and all-around nice guy, will be teaching a comprehensive mountaineering class. Jim has many years of experience climbing at a high level, including a new route on Mt. McKinley in 1997 near the east face from the Traleika Glacier- 35 pitches 5.10 A1 WI4. He has taught mountaineering for over 20 years and will be covering all aspects of mountaineering, with an emphasis on safety. No previous experience is necessary. This is a great opportunity to learn the skills necessary for becoming more competent in any mountain environment, climbing big mountains, or refreshing nearly forgotten skills.

The class will begin on Tuesday, February 8th, at 7:00 PM, at the Pipestone Mountaineering store, and will be held every Tuesday until April 5th, that's nine classes. The cost of the class is \$200.00 which is non-refundable. There will be a purchasing program offered to help recoup some of the costs of the class through gear purchases at Pipestone Mountaineering. Several field trips are planned during the class and graduates will be encouraged to take part in a group trip to be scheduled sometime in the spring or early summer. This will be a Rocky Mountaineers trip and open to all qualified parties. For more information and a course outline stop by Pipestone Mountaineering.

From the President:

Five people attended the board meeting on January 26th, which is a quorum; and we voted no on three of the items on the agenda. When we considered the benefits vs. the costs of joining the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, we decided it wasn't worth it. After all, we are mainly a recreational

From the President: Continued

club and do not automatically agree with all of the resolutions of this group. Likewise, when we looked at incorporating and applying for tax exempt status, the costs and duties outweighed any possible benefits. And, as Julie pointed out, we already have a federal tax ID, which accomplishes much the same thing. We are very supportive of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club, and like to help out as much as we can. But, when we considered how small our income is, and the needs we have, we decided to not make a donation to their pickup purchase fund. As President, I think this is a worthwhile cause, and encourage individuals and businesses to contact the Bitterroot Ski club and think about making a donation.

We also talked quite a bit about the pros and cons of having advertising in the newsletter. We were unable to reach an agreement, and decided to ask for other members opinions and explore this further before making a decision.

At our general meeting on January 12th the members voted against taking a stand, as a club, on the proposed ski resort development on Lolo Peak. The reasoning was that, since some of our members are probably in favor of the ski area, we should not alienate them by taking a stand on this resort. This is quite a reasonable decision, reflecting the desire that we should be mainly a recreational club.

Another thing we discussed at the meeting was our old mission statement, which is on the masthead of the newsletter. It was pointed out that the term "all types of recreational use of mountainous areas" would include motorized use, and should be changed. I have to point out that, to be consistent, since some of our members do snowmobile, and some may even use OHV's, and since we don't want to alienate them, we have to stick with this mission statement.

On the brighter side, I plan to continue to call for board meetings only when needed, instead of monthly. And we are offering a wider variety of activities than we have in years. It is great that some members are willing to lead multi-day, more challenging trips. We are going to try to revive the educational aspect of the club by participating in a

mountaineering class put on by Pipestone Mountaineering. As the previous article explained, the class itself is entirely run by Pipestone Mountaineering. However, club member Steve Niday will volunteer some assistance during the classes and help in the arrangement of the post graduation climb.

Be sure to attend the meeting on February 9th. It is a real treat to have such an accomplished climber come to Missoula. We thank Jim Wilson for

helping to arrange this event. Steve Schombel

Upcoming Events

Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 PM, February-April, the Wilderness Institute of the University of Montana will be presenting a lecture series entitled- *The Future of Wilderness in America: Change, Continuity, and Conservation.*

For more info: <http://www.forestry.umt.edu/research/MFCES/programs/wi/lectureseries.htm> or (406)243-5361

February 16, Wednesday: the Friends of Lolo Peak will be hosting a public information meeting at 7:00 PM in the Blue Room of the Children's Theater. Come out and see why this is an inappropriate use of a large piece of public land - our land; and also learn more about the impacts to the nearby communities and surrounding countryside. There will be slides, talks and displays, and a booth to join in this effort.

March 5, Saturday: the Westslope Chapter of Trout Unlimited is having its annual fund-raising banquet at 6:00 PM in the big banquet room of the Holiday Inn Parkside. Last year several of us purchased a "Rocky Mountaineers" table and had a blast. Contact Steve Schombel at 721-4686 if you are interested.

Upcoming Trips

It goes without saying, but I will say it anyway. You should always contact the trip leader prior to the trip if there are any questions. Especially in light of the recent unseasonably warm weather and poor snow conditions, trips may be changed or cancelled at the last minute.

Upcoming Trips

February 11-13, Friday-Sunday: Ice climbing in the Columbia Valley and Kootenay NP- Probably stay in Radium Hot Springs and possible climbs include: Haffner Creek and Marble Canyon in KNP; other climbs in the Columbia Valley south of Radium, including the Gibraltar Wall (145 m, WI-4) (described in the guidebook as "The western Rockies equivalent of the Weeping Wall . . . The route is a wide expanse of ice in three steep tiers separated by good belay ledges".

Thursday, Feb. 10 get out of the Flathead, drive up to Radium & stay the night.

Friday, Feb. 11 to Sunday, Feb. 13, 3 days of climbing. Drive home Sunday.

For more info email jhc@abanet.org or call Jim Cossitt at 756-6818.

February 12, Saturday: Superior Area- This trip is a re-do of last months trip, which didn't happen do to unseasonably warm weather and lousy snow conditions. Jim Goss would like to invite skiers up for a day of skiing on logging roads, and perhaps some side trips off piste. The exact route will depend on snow level and quality, and interest and abilities of attendees. Afterwards, Jim hopes people can stop by our house for supper. My wife Cathy and I have a small hot tub, so come prepared.

Instead of our usual rendezvous at Durango's, Jim suggests meeting at his house near Lozeau. Call him for specific directions at 822-5000.

February 12 & 13, Saturday & Sunday: Glacier National Park X Country Ski Trips- Feb. 12, Saturday: Autumn Creek Trail runs from Marias Pass to Bear Creek, about 6 miles. There is a 600 ft. altitude drop on the last mile and then a railroad crossing. Feb. 13, Sunday. Autumn Creek Trail from Marias Pass to Coonsa Creek near the "False Summit," about 8 miles. Both ski trips are point to point and require an even number of half full cars. These ski trips could turn out to be a hike if weather conditions continue to be unseasonably mild, so bring hiking boots. Call Fred Schwanemann for more information including B&B accommodations @ 542-7372

February 20, Sunday: Lubrecht Forest- Lubrecht has some nice un-groomed ski trails. The difficulty level is intermediate, and there is no avalanche danger. If there is inadequate snow at Lubrecht, we will go to the Chief Joseph area near Lost Trail Pass. For more information, e-mail ski@wrightmontana.net or call Alden Wright at 243-4790 (until 6 weekdays) or 542-1966 in the evenings.

February, Full Moon multi-day trip to Yellowstone Park- Shooting for a 4-6 day trip starting around Feb. 22. If you are interested, contact me and let me know what your preference is for scheduling. More details as the trip grows closer. Call or write if interested. Steve Niday, 721-3790 or seniday@yahoo.com.

February 23, Wednesday: Rattlesnake- Join the Sierra Club for a full moon ski in the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (NRA). The moonlight will guide us along Rattlesnake Creek on glistening winter trails through low elevation Ponderosa Pine forests and across wide-open meadows. This 8-mile round trip offers easy to moderate cross-country skiing for a variety of skill levels. The Rattlesnake NRA is the site of the Bitterroot-Mission group's fuel reduction partnership project with Society of American Foresters and the Forest Service. Hot drinks & warm winter treats will conclude the trip. Sorry, no dogs. This is a joint trip with the Rocky Mountaineers.

Trip leader: Margot Higgins, 543-0702, margothiggins@hotmail.com

February 24, Thursday: Moose Ridge Loop- This is a 14 mile ski on a loop trail at Lolo Pass. It could take 8++ hours to ski. We need a foot of snow for this trip, so call beforehand to check on the status of this trip. Call Fred Schwanemann @ 542-7372 for more information.

February 26, Saturday: Kid's sledding- If there is enough snow in town we'll go to Blue Mountain, otherwise it'll be Lolo Pass. We (my family) will go to the Hot Springs regardless. Julie Warner 543-6508.

Upcoming Trips

March 6, Sunday: Heart Lake, Great Burn- Join the Sierra Club and Great Burn Study Group for a full day of backcountry skiing up the South Fork of Trout Creek to Heart Lake. The round-trip will cover approximately 11 miles including some challenging skiing to reach beautiful Heart Lake along the Bitterroot divide in Montana. Participants will monitor for winter motorized violations within the Great Burn closure area. Great views and plenty of opportunities for animal tracking and powder turns.

The Great Burn is a 275,000 acre roadless area on the Montana-Idaho border just west of Missoula and proposed for protection as part of the Sierra Club's Lewis & Clark Campaign. It serves as a critical biological link between the Salmon-Selway Ecosystem to the south and the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem to the north. The area is home to mountain goats, moose, elk, lynx, wolverine, and wolf, which may be seen along the way.

This is a joint trip with the Rocky Mountaineers. Trip leader: Margot Higgins, 543-0702, margothiggins@hotmail.com

March 6, Sunday: Lolo Pass- Beginners ski day at Lolo Pass. Julie (Warner) Kahl will take beginning and intermediate cross country skiers to Lolo Pass for a fun day at our promo ski area. For more information contact Julie @ 543-6508.

March 13, Sunday: Lolo Pass- Cross-country ski along the Lolo Trail between Lee Creek and Packer Creek on the Bitterroot Divide. This is a moderate 9-mile point-to-point trip starting near Packer Meadows just inside Idaho and traveling NE into Montana and down Lee Creek. This route closely follows the explorer's route of 1805 and 1806. Skiers will be treated to some nice meadows and portions of intact forests. However, changes to the landscape will be painfully apparent on cut-over Plum Creek timberlands. This area of "checkerboard" ownership is a good example of the need to consolidate public lands through public acquisition. Bring a lunch! Sorry, no dogs. If snow is thin this trip will be modified. This is a joint trip with the Mission-Bitterroot Group of the

Sierra Club. Trip Leader; Steve Schombel, 721-4686, ssbell@montana.com

September, 2005: Mt. Whitney, CA- This peak is the highest in the lower 48, and very popular. Advanced reservations are required, starting in February. There is about a 50/50 chance of getting one. I'm planning to apply for an overnight permit on either a Monday or Tuesday in September, to allow time to drive down. Having flexible dates increases the odds. If anyone wants to add their name to the permit let me know early in February. There is a \$15 fee, which is non-refundable if successful, so be pretty sure you will be able to go. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686.

Trip Reports

January 6-10, Thur-Mon: Mt. Stimson, Glacier Park- Due to nasty weather and lack of interest, this trip was postponed. Steve Niday

January 7-9, Fri-Sun: East Pintler Peak Circumnavigation- As a consolation trip for the Stimson trip I spent 3 days in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness Area. The road is maintained to Moose Lake, which is where I parked. From there I followed the road south along the Middle Fork of Rock Creek to the trailhead that accesses Johnson Lake via the Falls Fork of Rock Creek. I camped at the outlet of Johnson lake, where I had running water. The next day was stormy, so instead of trying to climb East Pintler from the north side, which had been my original intention, I decided to ski around it. I skied over Pintler Pass, which was kind of scary in an avalanche sense on the open northerly side, but made for some nice turns on the southerly side. From there I more or less followed the trail to Oreamnos Lake, then northerly through the prominent unnamed pass between East and West Pintler Peaks. Both peaks could be climbed from this pass with very little avalanche danger and no significant difficulties. I didn't have enough fuel left in my tank to climb either. From there I eventually picked up the Hi Line trail and back to Johnson Lake for my second night, then out the third day. Steve Niday

Trip Reports

January 9, Sunday: A snowshoe trip- trip cancelled.

January 13-17, Ice Climbing in Waterton: the following is an accounting of Jim Cossit and Jim Foster's trip, written by Jim Foster.

Thursday, January 13th: It took us about another 3 hours to make it to Waterton. Got into the hostel around 2100 with temperatures around -25°F. We were the only ones with reservations for that night and as it turned out we had the hostel to ourselves all weekend. The three of us ended up sharing a room though.

Friday, January 14th: Friday started out about -35 F and warmed to a balmy high of -10°F but the belayer (Jim Foster) was in the sun and it was a perfectly clear and still day so it didn't seem that cold. We headed out a bit late in the morning to get rested, drink coffee, get our gear sorted & sharpened for the cold ice (killing time waiting for it to warm up). Our first destination was the Compound Gullies just above the Warden's compound. It was a WI 2+ to WI 3 ice flow. Took about 45 minutes to make the steep approach and the views from there were spectacular on this cold and clear blue day. The Prince of Wales hotel was right below us, Mount Cleveland was prominent to the south and we could see into Goat Haunt. Jim Cossitt led the climb to about 40 feet to a ledge. The top was a shelf of really rotten ice but he finally got two screws in for a top rope anchor. When I climbed it I added another screw since I wasn't comfortable with how close one of his screws was to the rotten stuff. The ice was very brittle and took a lot to get a tool set. The screws were very hard to turn as well. Needless to say we showered the deck with lots of shattered ice. We climbed until about 1600 and headed back. Before heading back to the hostel though we decided to scope out the ice on Cameron Lake Road and found some unbelievable ice formations to gawk at. We decided to climb the formation Quick & Dirty the next day which had everything from WI3 to WI6.

Saturday, January 15th: Saturday we got going around 0930. The sun was just lighting up the mountains but it was still twilight. Got to the

parking spot and someone else had already started the approach to Quick & Dirty. The approach was an easy 15 minutes and at the base of this massive ice fall that was probably a total of 300 feet, we stood with our mouths open. Two teams were roping up to ascend the main sheet, about 100 feet to a prominent ice ledge, and Jim and I began to sort our gear for a shorter ascent on the left side. Jim Cossitt led about 40 feet again and didn't feel comfortable continuing up. He built another top rope anchor and we made some laps on this ice. The day was quite a bit warmer than yesterday with temps around 15°F. Finally I got my gander up and decided we needed to climb higher so I climbed to Jim's anchor, put my fears aside and continued the lead. I climbed another 15 feet up set a screw and then traversed left and up onto a nice laid back ramp next to the rock face. There were two pitons set in the rock. So I set a screw in good ice and built an equalized cordelette anchor for more top roping. We estimated this climb now was around 60 feet above the deck. We continued to do laps on this top rope for the rest of the day.

Sunday, January 16th: Sunday we got started at 0930 again and headed back to the same ice formation. The wind in the valley was howling. Temps were now hovering around 30°F and a gusty wind was blowing - harbinger of the Chinook on its way. We had the wide, main climb to ourselves and Jim began another lead. He made it up about 30 feet of vertical ice (40 feet if you include the 45° ice ramp at the base) before psyching himself out. I lowered him and then continued the lead up another 30 feet to set a top rope anchor about 60 up. There was still another 40 feet to go to reach the first main ice ledge - but that was as far as I felt comfortable going. There was a lot of spray so I was getting coated with ice. On another climb up I tried to extend the lead and got up another 10 feet before psyching myself out - mostly because my strength was waning. I downclimbed and drilled an abalakov anchor for rapping later. We continued to do laps on this climb adding some variations to it. More teams of climbers arrived and one set up a 100 foot climb to the left of us on some WI5 and WI6 ice, Les Piliers

Des Putins and Pearl Necklace. The leader was Rob Hagler from Whitefish, a really good climber. It was fun to watch him grace up the ice. His partners were Dave from Great Falls and Blake from Lethbridge. Later he offered to let us climb on one of his ropes (he led a double 8mm rope and then made two top rope routes each with an 8mm rope - a little scary). Jim started out and got up about 30 feet before getting smacked by an ice missile and cutting his upper lip. I lowered him and tied into the rope for a try at it. I climbed all the way to the top and really pumped out my forearms - but it felt great to make it. Later I found out this climb is rated as a WI6. After the elation of that climb I was pretty much done for the day but Jim wanted to keep working on his technique. So, he did more laps on our climb. He added two more screws below the abalakov for back up and to make the rappel transfer easier later. Finally about 1500 we were both tired and Jim ascended one last time to rig the rappel, clean the anchor rigging and come down. I knew he was tired and was a bit worried that he might make a mistake. We had tried earlier to work out the kinks on transferring from a hanging belay to rappel on dead vertical ice - tricky business and Jim was struggling a bit with the details. He gave up after about 15 minutes and passed the torch back to me. I climbed up and started undoing the anchors and preparing to rappel off the Abalakov. Up to this point I had not put my life at the mercy of an abalakov before as I was very skeptical about its strength (it didn't matter that the book said they were tested at 900 kg - I was thinking about all the possibilities of failure). I cinched up on the rappel rope and gingerly removed the ice tool, and there I was hanging from my abalakov. Because we used an 11mm rope to climb with and it was quite stiff, the rappel was not smooth but jerky. So, I bounced my way down the rappel adding to my uneasiness each time I dynamically loaded the abalakov. With my two feet planted on flatter ground I let out a heart felt sigh of relief.

Monday, January 17th: We all got up packed our gear by 0900 and headed over to the Kilmorey Lodge for breakfast. This was the only commercial establishment in Waterton open for food service. After breakfast Jim headed back and Deb and I headed up to the gate on Cameron Lake Road for

some Nordic skiing. We had a wonderful ski to Cameron Lake. On our way back the temperatures rose a bit more and the snow began to really stick to our skies making it very hard to glide. The Chinook winds were ferocious all the way down the front range. After cresting Marias Pass we drove through a blizzard until we hit the freezing rain around Spruce Park. Back home about 1600.

January 16, Sunday: Trapper Peak- I think this is one of the nicest one-day ski trips in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. The upper thousand feet is typically windblown hard, but not very steep. The remainder of the terrain is of moderate difficulty, and there is little exposure to avalanche prone slopes. Be prepared for a long day though. It took me 7 hours to reach the summit, at 4:50 PM, and 4 hours to ski down, much of it by headlamp. The snow up to around 8'000 feet was deep and dense, which made the trailbreaking slow. More trailbreakers would make this trip faster and make for fresher legs for the downhill. Expect to park at the West Fork Road, the road to the trailhead is not maintained. Steve Niday

January 29-30, Sat-Sun: Mt. Powell, Flint Creek Range- Although warm weather and poor snow conditions continued to dominate in western Montana, this trip received a great turnout with Jack Kuehn, Yong Kim, Ron Pierson, and Steve Niday joining me for this winter overnight-mountaineering excursion. Originally I had planned on approaching Mt. Powell (the Flint Cr. Range high point) via a SE route, but after seeing little snow on this side I decided on a NE approach. We got an early start (12:30 PM) on Saturday after driving a good ways up FR 5149 to the Forest Service boundary (6300'). This road continues for almost 3 more miles before ending near Robinson Gulch- we followed it sometimes skiing, sometimes walking. The road crosses some large wide open parks that present some great views- unfortunately the south facing portions of these parks had absolutely no snow. What snow there was was solid and crusted over. At about the two mile mark Yong (who had been lagging behind due to some major problems with his ski's) caught up to us and elected to give the rest of us the go-ahead to proceed at a faster pace- he said he would either get to our camp late, or just camp wherever he got. We continued on, descending into Robinson Gulch,

then ascending (along the Martin Lake Trail #61) to a ridge between Robinson Gulch and Tin Cup Joe Creek. After proceeding along the ridge for a ways we dropped down into the Tin Cup Joe Creek side. Views of Mt. Powell, Deer Lodge Mtn. and the long vertical ridge connecting them opened up for us. We decided to stop and set up camp in the forest about 4:30 at about 7840'. Temps all day had been on the warm side (30-35 degrees) and continued through the night (20ish). Yong meanwhile elected to set up camp up on the ridge. We hit the trail at about 8:30 the next morning and bushwhacked SW, gaining elevation gradually into the upper reaches of a basin and a beautiful meadow to the NW of Mt. Powell. Ron, who had also been having ski problems elected to turn back to camp about here. From the meadow Jack, Steve and myself climbed steeply up to a forested ridge then up the ridge through open forest to treeline. From here we took off our ski's and scrambled up the remaining 1/2 mile and 1200 ft to the 10,168' summit. Views were nil- we were up in the clouds. We (Steve and I) quickly headed down and met Jack about 400' below the top- he elected to turn around and proceed down with us. We put on our ski's and had some fun skiing down through the open forested area. We arrived back in camp about 2:30, quickly struck it, and headed back. We caught up to Ron and Yong and all of us arrived back at the start about 5:15 PM. Total distance from where we parked to the summit was about 7.5 to 8 miles (one way). All around a fun trip- would be nice to see some snow though! *Forest Dean*

Note the change in membership fees, which was passed at the October 13, 2004 meeting.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Family Yearly Membership: \$20.00 - paper newsletter
 Family Yearly Membership: \$10.00 - electronic newsletter
 Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers" and send to:

Rocky Mountaineers, P.O. Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it.

Print Name

Signature Date

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age

I, (print name) _____ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities. In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).

Club Contacts

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