



No. 525 - September 17, 1976

A newsheet published by the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. Send subscriptions & address changes to: Tim Ryan, 708 Loma, Hermosa Beach, 90254. Subscriptions \$2 per year. This issue 4 pages.

TAHQUITZ, AUGUST 28 & 29

Nothing new ever happens at Tahquitz, and this climb was no exception. However, what did happen occurred in large quantities, as 21 guests and 13 RCS members appeared on Saturday. Diligent effort by assistant leader LeRoy Russ got this menagerie sorted into about 15 parties, accomodating all those who needed a climb with a Safety Committee member. The weather was slightly warm and humid but still pleasant, the usual routes were done, and the usual late party got back at 7:20, which was just in time to get down to the parking lot before dark. Sunday was less of the same, with 19 climbers. Rain activity in the area never did reach Tahquitz, but it may have spurred the climbers on, because the traditional late party failed to materialize, and the leader found himself at Humber Park, completed signout sheet in hand, at 4:00.

For those too lazy to climb, the kibitzing from lunch was excellent both days. The Blank was ascended Saturday, with several falls on the overhang, and there was a mass attack on the Vampire (free of course) on Sunday. At one point four climbers were hanging at the top of the Bat Crack.

A Climbers Guide, 1970 version, was found at Lunch Rock, but don't bother to claim it unless you can duplicate the illegible signature inside. A pack and a rope were reported stolen on Saturday, apparently from a group not climbing with the RCS. The pack had been left by the trail near the start of the Open Book. Generally Lunch Rock is by far the safest place to leave equipment because there is almost always someone there to detur a potential thief. Also, the Stokes Litter is again missing from the south side of the rock.

LH

SEVEN FOR SAFETY MOUNT PACIFICO AUG. 22

The August 22 Safety Tests at Mt. Pacifico were attended by 7 students and 9 RCS instructors. It was a gorgeously clear day, quite Alpine in temperature due to a brisk wind. Hans Lees, Safety Committee Chairman, was in charge. Other instructors were Herb Null, Dick Stanton, Emory Yount, Phil Bruce, Ruth & John Mendenhall, Bob Lindgren, and Leonard Hall. Phil Bruce provided amenities such as chairs and lemonade which helped keep some of the RCS members from going native.

Later, the Safety Committee met to vote in the following new RCS members: Jim Butler, Pat Butler, Diana Dee, Robert Somoano, Abe Siemens, Dave Erskine, and Dave Hornby. Former member Doug Young was also reinstated.

RM & LR

SIERRA CLUB PRESENTS K-2 CLIMB PROGRAM

Galen Rowell was a member of the American 1975 K-2 Expedition. His slides, and a specially produced film, will be the feature of a gala fund-raiser held on behalf of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter, Friday, November 5th, at the Embassy Auditorium, 843 So. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles. Three free parking lots available at 9th & Grand. No-host wine bar opens at 7:00pm, program begins promptly at 8:00pm.

Rowell is a veteran rock and mountain climber, with numerous first ascents to his credit in Yosemite and the Canadian Rockies. He is a professional photo-journalist, whose work has appeared in National Geographic, Mountain Gazette, Summit, and the Sierra Club Bulletin, plus many others. His photographs have appeared in the prestigious Sierra Club Calendars.

Rowell's book, 'The Vertical World of Yosemite' has been acclaimed throughout the world. His new book on K-2, 'In the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods' will be published by the Sierra Club this fall, with copies available at the showing for autographing by Rowell.

K-2 is the worlds second highest mountain, and dominates the Karakorum Range of Pakistan. It lies astride the Pakistani-Chinese border, and for twenty years has
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NEXT ISSUE: October 20, 1976
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(earlier if possible)

C A L E N D A R

Sept. 25-26 Rock Climb - Tahquitz
Leaders: John Moore, Al Toering
Oct. 2-3 Work Party - Baldy Hut
Contact: Betty Powers
Oct. 9-10-11 Rock Climb - Yosemite
Leaders: Mindy Bagdon, Tim Ryan
Oct. 20 Mugelnoos Meeting - 8pm.

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS 3rd Weds. of each month 8pm, Lemon Grove Recreation Center, 4959 Lemon Grove Ave., L. A., just off Hollywood Fwy. near Melrose exit
Trip news, program, refreshments, etc. Climbers, Skiers, guests welcome.

RCS NOTES

YOSEMITE VALLEY / OCT. 9-11

A group campsite has been reserved for this climb. Parking for the site is on the north side of the North Pines Campground. The campsite is a one-to-two block walk-in from the parking area. Climbs from Royal Arches to Washington Column are conveniently close to the campsite. Detailed information on the climb will be posted in the Visitor Center.

TR

THE MUGELNOOS: All the news that fits... and then some.

Rowell K-2 Program - Continued from page one.

been off-limits to mountaineers. Galen Rowell's breath-taking photography, plus the film produced by him and by other members of the American expedition, depicts K-2 in all its majesty and bears witness to that quality of mountaineering that often leads the climbers to liken their experiences to those of artists.

This will be the only opportunity to see Galen Rowell's program in the Los Angeles area. Tickets available by reservation only. Send \$5.00 check with self-addressed stamped envelope to: Sierra Club-Rowell, 2410 Beverly Blvd., L.A. 90057.

NK

MORE ON SAN ANTONIO SKI HUT

Dear Editor: Jim Powers (Aug. Mugelnoos) speaks of "this hallowed publication, The Mugelnoos, which has given the ski hut so much adverse publicity lately." The Mugelnoos has never given the ski hut any "adverse" publicity.

To the contrary, Mugelnoos contributors have tried hard (factually, and sometimes emotionally) to help make Sierra Club people understand that this hallowed ski hut is in serious danger from the BMTC's thousand-strong annual ice axe practice in its environs. Primarily, they would like to see the Club's policy of keeping its trips small (thus reducing people-impact in any one area) applied to the ski hut locale.

RM

You bet that John Wedberg and his friends will continue to work to save both the Baldy Hut and its surrounding environment from destruction. It is those who want to continue to bring large groups of people into wilderness areas who want to "turn back the clock." Educate, not alienate is a good idea; if the BMTC returns to the Baldy Bowl on some pretext or another (see excerpt from ExCom Minutes below), how about education for them regarding respect of private property and trail etiquette.

"2. The matter of BMTC use of Baldy Bowl generated significant discussion. John Wedberg of the hut committee and John Finn, BMTC ice axe practice coordinator, have cooperated in locating a new training site on the slopes between Throop Peak and Mt. Hawkins. Council recommends ExCom direct BMTC to use the new area unless determined

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO MUGELNOOS NOW DUE !!!

The annual subscription fee to Mugelnoos of \$2 is now due, and should be sent promptly to Mugelmailer Tim Ryan, 710 Loma, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254.

The following persons are already paid up for 1976-77: J. Adams, D. Barton, A. Carlson, D. Eaton, J. Gedaugas, G. Reid, J. Sarazen, R. Sheperd, A. Siemens, C&R Smith. The following subscribed after Mar. '76 and don't have to pay again untill Oct. '77: D. King, G. Neuner, Val. Lloyd, T. Halula, H. Baker, W. Strong, O. Benitez, Dr. R. Sheaff, J. Trotier, D. de Forest Hornby, H. Moore, M. Donahue, P&J Butler, D. Katz, S. Kinney, G. Smith, C. Youngberg, T. Duryea, R. Kirkpatrick, and San Sugine.

(The Mugelmailer has noted a tendency for some to forget to pay at all, and for others -- too honest for their own good -- to pay many times over.)

RM

NEW ADDRESSES:

Vivian Mendenhall
815 Main Street, No. 3
Laurel MD 20810

R. J. Secor
3223 N. 13 th Street
Tacoma WA 98416

NOOS SINGING THE '50's BLUES

Please remember that old Mugelnooses are needed for the American Alpine Club library. Particularly desired are issues for all of 1952, most of 1954, and some for 1950, 53, 55, 58, & 59, as detailed in the Aug. issue. Odd numbers will be filled in by Xerox. As an inducement or bribe, RDM offers in exchange copies of some of the very early issues of the late '30's and '40's, which are collectors items. Contact Ruth Mendenhall, 335 Sequoia Dr., Pasadena 91105; 793-0806

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unsuitable by BMTIC during subsequent investigations. If Baldy Bowl is to be used, additional stringent guidelines must be enforced. MSC (Bayless-Furst) direct MTC to change the location of its 1977 ice axe practice to the area between Throop Peak and Mt. Hawkins; if BMTIC determines such area unsuitable, Baldy Bowl may be used; further BMTIC should make every effort to divide its groups and use multiple locations thereby reducing impact in any one area." - (From "Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club, June 3, 1976.")

BL

MORE ON BROKEN POLYPRO HARNESS

June Mugelnoos reported breakage of one MSR Polypro climbing harness and near-failure of another, during the leader belay (bucket fall) part of the Safety Tests May 24. On reading this report, Larry Penberthy of MSR requested return of the damaged harness for examination. We quote here part of his comments, and express some other opinions on belay techniques and equipment.

Penberthy wrote in part to Dave Perkins, whose harness parted where a carabiner anchored him to a sling: "It is quite apparent that the climbing rope ran across the webbing, thus cutting the webbing by a phenomenon known as melt-abrasion. The remedy for this problem is to use some belaying system which does not allow the running belay rope to ride across the webbing. It would not do any good to change to other synthetics such as nylon, because they are subject to the same type of failure. Our recommendation is to use either a Sticht Plate or the friction hitch..."

Dave Perkins states that he was not belaying through the anchor carabiner, and that he believes the harness broke rather than being cut. He says that he held the first bucket fall with a dynamic belay, which may have left melt marks on part of the harness, but the anchor held. The second fall was held with a completely static belay - he states categorically that there was no rope slippage through his hands - and the harness failed under the strain at the anchor point.

To Pat Butler, whose harness showed damage, Penberthy wrote much in the same vein, including the comments: "The frayed portions clearly show melt abrasion... We will add a warning note to all harnesses pointing out that a belay rope should not be allowed to run across synthetic material... I am puzzled as to why it is being allowed to happen in the Angeles Chapter..."

Pat Butler replied to Penberthy in part: "...It appears to me that the rope friction certainly contributed, but I do not know whether it was the sole cause... I believe the harness should be made from (heavy) tubular webbing..."

Of course agreeing with the obvious fact that synthetic materials are subject to friction damage, we consider it more than a coincidence that in this summer's two RCS Safety Tests, covering 21 students, no harness or other tie-in method showed any damage except the two MSR Polypro harnesses.

As to belay techniques, the "Friction Hitch" recommended by Penberthy appears to have the belay rope running through a self-loop, which seems to hold potential dangers for the climbing rope itself. Re Sticht Plates, we quote from Advanced Rockcraft by Royal Robbins:- "The Sticht Plate (is) a simple device to help the belayer hold a fall or sustain the leader on tension... The disadvantages are that the belayer cannot manage the rope as quickly and easily, and the rope does not pass around the body. If the system fails, the belayer is left with the rope only in his hands, and that makes an ineffective belay. This is a more complicated way to belay, and involves carrying an extra piece of equipment. The plate does, however, make it possible for a light person to hold a heavy one in a fall involving little friction." Robbins recommends a well-placed hip belay with a good stance.

Freedom of the Hills, Third Ed., says that the hip belay remains the favorite in North America and that special pieces of equipment to make the belayer's job easier add complexity, and involve dependence on gadgetry, leaving gaps in the climber's training which may have fatal results if the gadget is lost or forgotten.

Summation

John Mendenhall sums up: "It is obviously dangerous practice to pass the belay rope through an anchor carabiner. Dave Perkins was not doing this when the harness failed. If the harness shows abrasion, it could have occurred previously. I advise climbers to use sturdy equipment that can withstand considerable abuse. As to belaying: the body belay is safest because the rope is cushioned by the body and the slight 'run' produced in even a static belay. Any device that creates a sharp bend over metal (e.g. Sticht Plate), or arrangement where it locks on a carabiner and itself (e.g. friction hitch), greatly endangers the rope."

RM & JM

BEARTOOTH MOUNTAINS, MONTANA

Choosing the fast, easy way, Ed and Mary Omberg, R. J. Secor and Barbara Lilley flew to Billings, Mont. on Sat. Aug. 7, crammed all their gear into a rental car and drove to the end of the road at West Rosebud Creek. Sunday they packed heavy loads into a base camp at Avalanche Lake. Discouraged by rain on Monday, they hiked up Mystic Mountain (12,053, 3rd ascent). Tuesday they donned crampons, ascended the Granite Glacier to the saddle between Granite Pk. and Mt. Tempest, and climbed Granite Pk. (12,799, highest peak in Montana) via the "standard" south side route. Increasing hail showers and being "buzzed" on the summit contributed to an after dark return to camp, highlighted by a 1200' sitting glissade down Granite Glacier.

On Wed. they scrambled up Tempest Pk. (12,478) by its long flat south ridge. On Thursday they raced a thunderstorm to the summit of Mt. Villard (12,337) via a steep snow slope and Cl. 3 crud on the southwest side (they won). On Friday, an attempt on Glacier Pk. was abandoned due to lack of time to complete their proposed route. They packed out to their car on Saturday and recommend this beautiful area, well worth visiting. Just bring adequate equipment.

RCS ANNUAL PICNIC

EXTRAGANZA

BIG ROCK - Oct. 24

Start 8:00 AM - End 5:00 PM

Prizes - Come All

Wine - Cold Beer - Free Food - Wives

Come One - Tall Tales

Girls - Girls - Girls!

Games - Water Sports

Climbing! - Boys - Boys - Boys!

HIGHLIGHTS AND INFORMATION

1. Internationally famous Caterer, Donna Lu Mroczkowski will supervise preparation of the FREE FOOD which will be financed by the fabulously rich RCS treasury. This is sure to be a spread not soon forgotten! Also, wine, ice cold beer, ice cold soft drinks, and ice water will be available for sale at cost, bring change. Plates, cups & utensils will be provided.
2. Internationally famous Climber, Royal Robbins and some of his friends plan to attend this gala event, adding to & partaking of the merriment. This is an opportunity to drink short beers and swap tall tales with Royal and his pals.
3. Bring ropes & biners for the many interesting bolt routes (5.0-5.10). Bring bikinis & water wings for swimming and splashing. Can anyone bring a power boat & water skis? If so contact Emory Yount, there is a good place for this right next to the rock climb area.
4. Bring wives, children, dates; everyone (except dogs) welcome for the circuses, fun-and-games, contests-and-prizes. NOTE: since food and drink will be furnished, please notify Tom Jeter if you plan to come and how many in your party prior to 20 October.
5. DETAILS: Big Rock climbing area, Perris Reservoir near Riverside. Go south on U.S. 395 past March Air Force Base. Turn east on Martin St at sign pointing to "Perris Reservoir". Look for RCS arrows near reservoir leading to Ranger Headquarters (mobile home with flagpole). IMPORTANT: You must register your car and occupants, and pay \$1.50 fee per car before parking in designated parking area. You will get a ticket if you fail to do this. Please car pool, The Supervising Ranger, Tim Neeley, asked there be no more than 20 cars at the parking site. NOTE: There is a 15 minute hike over poor trail (not hard) from the parked cars to the climbing-picnic area.

TJ