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A newsheet published by and for the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter since 1938. Send subscriptions and address changes to Dove Menkes, 2286 Loma Alta Dr., Fullerton, CA 92633. \$2 per year due in October.

RAY BEAL KILLED AT YOSEMITE

L. Raymond Beal, 54, was killed September 1 while climbing at Yosemite on a scheduled RCS climb. He fell 270 feet to his death when his rappel anchor failed (see detailed article this issue). Ray had been climbing with the RCS for four years, two of them since becoming a member in August, 1977. He climbed actively with the section in the Sierra, and at Tahquitz, Suicide Rock, Joshua Tree, the Pinnacles, Sespe Gorge, and Stony Point. Perhaps his most spectacular climb was his ascent of Lost Arrow a year ago.

Ray was a past president of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Art Directors. He had recently finished work on the "Jason's Star Command" series. He was for many years art director for "The Lucy Show", and worked recently on "Flatbush", "Jessica", "Grandma Goes to Washington" and "A Woman Called Moses".

Ray is survived by his three sons, Michael, Douglas, and Bruce.
FW/Ed.

GLACIER PEAK, WASHINGTON

Soloed July 12. Onto Sitkum Glacier at circa 7300'. Above the cleaver the bridges had all sunk down into the crevasses, so soloed this by trial and error (mostly the latter). Remainder of climb to 10,541' summit easy, with ample bridges. Fortunately, the sun did not burn my bridges behind me.
JDM

A THANK YOU IS DUE

As a contrast to those who have expected the Ski Mountaineers Section to continue forever without any contribution on their part, it is perhaps appropriate at this time to pay tribute to those unsung heroes who have generously given of their time and patience to lead the "Introductory Tours"--people like George Shiino, John Wedberg, John Mendenhall, Freeman Allen, Walt Boge, Izzy Lieberman, Walt Davie--for without their help in recruiting qualified skiers and members, the SMS would likely have ended its existence some time ago. They have also made an invaluable contribution to the SMS safety record on scheduled tours--a record which few other activity groups can match. If some SMS members really feel that bringing Nordic skiers into the Section is necessary to maintain its existence, then perhaps it is time to re-introduce the plan for a Wilderness Skiing Section to provide for both Alpine and Nordic groups (but without involving the Snow Touring Committee) and at the same time simplify the by-laws to try to make it possible to continue to operate as a Section. A copy of the first draft of these proposed by-laws, which had been agreed to by those who were Central Committee members at that time but were rejected by the Snow Touring Committee, will be available for consideration at the SEPTEMBER 24 SKI MOUNTAINEERS SECTION MEETING. But to implement even these will require help on your part--so, see you there!
BJL

COMMENTS REQUESTED

This is to inform all RCS members that

Kathy Candall

has passed her safety test and is being considered for membership in the section.

Comments or opinions as to applicant's safe or unsafe climbing practices by any RCS member should be brought to the attention of the Safety Committee Chairman, Andy Fried, no later than October 12, 1979.

Andy Fried

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 NEXT ISSUE: October 16, 1979
 DEADLINE: October 13, 1979 (Fri)

MUGELNOOS MEETING: Tuesday October 16, 1979 7:30 p.m., L.A. Dept of Water and Power Auditorium, 111 N Hope St., downtown L.A. Free parking. Program, refreshments; climbers, skiers, guests all welcome.

C A L E N D A R

Sept 22-23	Sat/Sun	Needles Climb Mindy Bagdon, Leslie Masters
Sept 24	Mon	Ski Mountaineers Meeting, 7 pm John Wedberg's
Oct 6-8	Sat-Mon	Yosemite Climb Fred Wing, Dick DeRusha
Oct 13-14	Sat/Sun	"Howard Gates Day" San Antonio Ski Hut Kathy Quinn
Oct 14	Sun	RCS Picnic Big Rock
Oct 16	Tues	Mugelnoos Meeting. Program: John Ribarich will describe his successful climb of Mt McKinley's west buttress this summer.
Oct 25	Thur	Annual RCS Business Meeting, DWP Rm 1273

RCS BUSINESS MEETING

The annual RCS business meeting will be held Thur., Oct. 25, 1979 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Dept. of Water & Power, 111 N. Hope St., L.A., Rm 1273. Officers will be elected, and those who have not replied to their notices of deficiencies in membership requirements must be present to state their case to retain membership. Those interested in running for office are encouraged to contact Ron Master at (714) 537-4837 evenings. All members are urged to attend as a quorum is needed to conduct official business.

RM

RCS TRAINING CLASS

Registration for the 1980 RCS Rock climbing training class is starting now. Those interested should request an application form from LeRoy Russ (RCS), 4587 Don Tomaso Dr., Los Angeles 90008 by October 15 (include large self-addressed stamped envelope).

LR

CLIMB ALASKA 1980?

June, 1980, private trip. Write to: Scott Bailey, 4016 Miraloste Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274.

NOTICE: Need 3 people to join a party of three to climb the Mexican volcanoes. Leave Sat, Dec 15 a.m. and return Friday, Dec 24. Call Kathy Crandall (213) 794-6491 or write: 1025 E. Woodbury, Pasadena, CA 91104.

NEW ADDRESS: Kathy Crandall
(see above).

NEW PHONE:
Andy Fried (213) 993-1891

ANNUAL RCS PICNIC AT BIG ROCK

DATE: October 14, 1979
 TIME: 10 a.m. - ending around 5:00 p.m.
 WHAT TO BRING: Everyone is to bring main course for 4 people
 Persons names ending in A-M-Salad for 8 people
 N-Z-Desert for 8 people

RCS will provide refreshments, but bring water as none is available at picnic area.

Due to popular demand, we will once again meet for the annual RCS picnic at Big Rock. The picnic has always provided an opportunity for RCS/Ski Mountaineers to climb, eat, drink and be merry. This is also counted as a climb.

Parking permits and entrance fees are required and can be purchased at entrance gate. Permits must be posted on each car's dashboard. The directions to Big Rock are: take Hwy. 60 to 295 (South to San Diego). Exit at Ramona Expressway. Turn left at 2nd stoplight to park office.

I would suggest bringing something to sit on such as a folding deck chair. They came in quite handy last year. Hope to see you all there and bring family and friends.

FC

DETAILS OF TUOLUMNE MEADOWS ACCIDENT

I regret to report that an accident occurred at the RCS Tuolumne Meadows Climb that resulted in the death of Ray Beal. Ray, who had been a member for two years and climbing with the section for four years, fell 270 feet while rappelling from the top of the second pitch of "South Crack" on Polly Dome.

Dick DeRusha and Mindy Bagdon were a rope of two climbing above Ray and Ed Missen, the second team. Ray and Ed arrived at the top of the second pitch and were waiting for Dick and Mindy to clear the belay stance at the top of the third pitch. Ray, who was wearing a light, short-sleeved shirt, decided to abandon the climb because he became cold. He was going to rappel down and get a second rope to facilitate retrieving the equipment from the broad ledge that he and Ed were on. He clipped a carabiner into one of two fixed 1 1/2" Chouinard angle pitons that had been deeply placed in a funnel-shaped crack that ran across the ledge from the edge to the wall behind, a distance of about four feet. The eye of the piton was several inches below the surface of the surrounding rock. He tied a figure-eight knot into one end of the 165' rappel rope and clipped this into the carabiner. Another figure-eight knot was tied into the other end of the rope, to prevent rappelling off the end, and the rope was deployed down the face. Dick and Mindy, who were having route-finding problems, also decided to retreat. Dick suggested to Ray and Ed that they wait until all four were at the ledge and could rappel together. Dick down-climbed the third pitch to them, clipped into the rear piton, and after checking the anchors began to belay Mindy. By this time Ray and Ed had been on the ledge for an hour and a half. Ray, because he was cold, decided to rappel off. Dick again suggested he wait but Ray prepared to descend and fastened the single-line rappel rope into his CMI figure-eight descender. He began to tie a safety prussik incorrectly, which Dick corrected. Ray crossed the ledge from the left side around Ed, who was left of the crack, and passed on the outside of Dick who was standing facing the wall to the right of the crack belaying Mindy. At this time, Dick heard a "click" and looking behind saw Ray and the rope tumbling over the edge and down the face.

Larry Tidball, who was at the road near the base of the climb, rushed to Ray and began first aid. The paramedics arrived within fifteen minutes and, with a doctor who was passing by, began CPR and other efforts. Ray never regained consciousness and was pronounced dead forty-five minutes later.

Andy Fried and Randy McDonald climbed up the route the next day to investigate the anchors. They tried several types of carabiners in the lower piton on the ledge. With a rope in the carabiner, they were able to demonstrate that the gate would open against the rock or against the rope jammed between the rock and the carabiner. The gate would open against either wall of the crack.

The major cause of the accident, in my opinion, was that Ray was rappelling from a single piton with a single carabiner, where the piton placement was such that this was a hazardous procedure. The placement of the piton was such that either the rope opened the gate as force was applied to the rope or that the gate was opened against the rock and as force was applied, the rope slipped out. Later examination of the rope showed the figure-eight knots to be intact and not tightened.

Contributing causes were:

1. Ray, while waiting on the ledge, said he usually carried a sweater while climbing, but that day had left it in the car.
2. The rappel was rigged to a single point of protection using a single carabiner, rather than using the second piton which was available or placing a back-up anchor.
3. He apparently did not double-check and test the system before beginning his descent.

I am sorry to have to make this report. Ray was a competent climber and a friend of many in the RCS. I feel that it is necessary that we try to understand, as much as possible, how this accident occurred. I would like to thank all the people who were on the Tuolumne Meadows trip for their willing cooperation and the help that they gave following the accident.

JC

PROPOSED SKI MOUNTAINEERS BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Ski Mountaineers bylaws have been supported by 49 sponsors, including James McNamara and others listed last month. The voting procedure is specified in Article VII of the 1972 bylaws, as follows:

"VII. AMENDMENTS AND CONFLICTS

These By-Laws may be amended at any time by a majority vote of those returning a mailed, signed, secret ballot. The proposed change shall be published in the Mugelnoos, or mailed to the Members, at least two weeks before the ballots must be returned. In case of variance between these By-Laws and the By-Laws of the Angeles Chapter or the Constitution or By-Laws of the Sierra Club, the latter shall govern."

Note that there is no requirement for any specific number of sponsors, or for prior approval at a meeting. Mail ballots must be sent to all members.

Any member may obtain a copy of the complete bylaws by writing to the Secretary; copies will also be available at the meeting.

Certain revisions and clarifications of the proposed amendments have been suggested, such as the removal of the Big Badge requirement for some members on the Elections Committee, and adding a statement that nominations may, of course, also be made by any member from the floor. The proposed amendments have been revised accordingly and the revised text is reprinted below. If no sponsor objects, the revised amendments will be submitted for a vote, by mail. In the case of an objection, each revision and each original amendment will be voted on separately by mail, as the Chairman rules. The text follows:

1. Replace Section IV A in its entirety with the following text: (Only this amendment has been revised as indicated)

"IV. Officers

- A. Election: At the first Mugelnoos meeting in February, the Chairman of the outgoing Central Committee shall appoint an Elections Committee, composed of five members who are not members of the Central Committee. Candidates may be nominated from the floor at the February meeting, or by written communication with the Committee. All candidates must be willing to serve. This Committee shall prepare a list of candidates for publication in the March Mugelnoos. The number of candidates shall be larger than the number of officers to be elected. No member of the Elections Committee shall be a candidate for election. Secret ballots shall be mailed to all members with the March Mugelnoos and shall be counted and the election certified by the Elections Committee at the April Mugelnoos meeting. If for some reason this schedule cannot be adhered to, the election shall be held at the earliest practical time, and the Central Committee shall continue in office until it is completed."

2. Change for last sentence of Section V A (Meetings) to read as follows: (new or revised text underlined)

"Upon petition by ten members the Central Committee shall bring any motion to a vote at the next Ski Mountaineers Section meeting, or by secret mailed ballot if the petitioner request. If the motion is approved by a majority of the members voting in person or by mail, the Central Committee shall be obliged to carry out the wishes of the membership."

3. Modify Section IV, D, 1c to read as follows:

"1c The Ski Mountaineering Committee Chairman shall be responsible for conducting the Ski Mountaineering Training Program and the Sierra Club Ski Mountaineers Test, and for reporting results to the Central Committee. The Ski Mountaineering Committee Chairman shall solicit and collect outing proposals from leaders for inclusion in the Chapter Schedule or Mugelnoos. The Ski Mountaineering Committee Chairman must be a Big Badge member."

4. Modify Section IV, D, 3 to read as follows (more General Responsibilities of the Central Committee):

"3 Prepare a schedule of Ski Mountaineers Section activities, incorporating outings proposed by qualified leaders, and arrange for programs and refreshments at Mugelnoos meetings for which the Ski Mountaineers Section is responsible. The Central Committee shall review tour proposals to assure compliance with the Section Safety Policy, and may disapprove proposed tours not meeting safety requirements."

5. Add Section 1e to Section IV, D.

"1e The Membership Chairman shall be responsible for recruitment of new members, relations with current members, and the explanation of current membership requirements."

ARGUMENT FOR SMS BYLAW REVISIONS

Briefly, the arguments for the bylaw revisions are as follows:
Elections: In the past, a few people have served on the Central Committee for an inordinate length of time, filling the few vacancies with people who volunteered for a year or so. This procedure effectively shuts off growth and change. A better procedure, adopted by other sections, is to appoint a committee to find enough candidates to provide real competition for all of the posts. It is optimistic to expect people to rush forward, or to expect the office-holders to seek out their own replacements; hence the need for a separate temporary committee. Considering the gasoline shortage, and the fact that many of our active members live out of the local area, the need for a mailed ballot should be obvious.

Schedule: Past Central Committees have complained that their workload is too heavy. No wonder; the present bylaws make the Committee responsible for planning all of the tours. Few other sections follow this procedure, because it limits the number and variety of events that can be run and therefore the size of the section. Leaders should initiate and plan the outings, while the Central Committee should review and approve them. This procedure results in a wider variety of outings, and enables many more to be run and the Section to grow. The Ski Mountaineering Chairman (not the same person, necessarily, as the Chairman of the Central Committee) will in effect be the Outings and Safety Chairman. He or she is to be a Big Badge member (as always) because that classification denotes someone technically qualified as a ski mountaineer to judge the proposals. At present, the Secretary does much of the planning; there is no requirement that the Secretary be technically qualified, although the present Secretary is. Of course, the Ski Mountaineering Chairman could be a member of the Central Committee, and could be Secretary, for that matter. The Ski Mountaineering Chairman will be responsible only for the outings and training schedule, not social events, or Mugelnoos meetings, which are provided for in a separate section of the bylaws. OM

Membership: To increase the size of the SMS, an active program is required to get and keep members. Someone must actively plan and conduct various recruiting events, including social events. This effort must be continuous, and, therefore, should be assigned to a permanent committee.

ARGUMENT AGAINST SMS BYLAW REVISIONS

A petition has been circulated by Owen Maloy with a cover letter by Maloy, Goebel and Secor. This petition will make changes and additions to the section bylaws its sponsors claim will revitalize the SMS. Since they have the necessary signatures on this petition, it will be voted on by those attending a general membership meeting on Sept. 24th.

The petition sponsors claim the bylaw changes would remove power from a small group of members and return it to the general membership by a more fair election process and more delegation of power. They also claim it will solve a membership crisis. In reality these change changes will do the opposite.

These bylaws will take power from the members by abolishing their right to nominate Central Committee candidates from the floor at the April Mugelnoos meeting. Under the new bylaws candidates will be nominated by an elite committee of mostly Big Badge members.

Power now held by six freely elected Central Committee members will be concentrated in one office, a "Ski Mountaineering Committee Chairman". He will be responsible for all SMS outings, checkout tour and training, Mugelnoos SMS programs and Mugelnoos refrestments. He also must be a Big Badge member. This is not a delegation of responsibilities, its a concentration of responsibility and too much work for one office.

The petition claims our membership crisis is caused by the cost of alpine touring equipment and not allowing Nordic pin bindings, trips not having more variety and members not being able to attend meetings because of gasoline or travel distance problems. These arguments are simply not true. Alpine touring equipment can be obtained at a modest cost by using equipment for sale by the section and used equipment at local ski and rental shops. You don't have to start with "Ramer" bindings and "Hexel" skis. In past seasons there have been both hard and easy trips. It's a known fact, by active members, the easy trips have had very poor support. Other sections seem to still have good or adequate attendance at their meetings and we were having membership problems long before the gasoline crisis.

The arguments, in the petition, on membership just don't wash. A membership problem is caused by different reasons than those above and should be openly discussed at the Sept. 24th meeting. A new office

of membership Chairman won't solve anything.

For the above reasons I urge all concerned members to attend the Sept. 24th meeting and vote no on these bylaws. I also suggest the present acting Central Committee use secret ballots for this bylaws election since any petitions signers may want to vote no after reading and really understanding it.

Additionally a Central Committee election is planned at this meeting. Any member who is unhappy with the present Committee members should then nominate someone he feels will do a better job. BF

NOTICE TO RCS MEMBERS, STUDENTS AND GUESTS

On all climbs, you are required to comply with the rules which appear on the Sign-in sheet, in order to insure that emergencies can be handled properly and promptly. When you climb with the RCS please read these rules again. The following points are stressed at this time.

1. Never neglect to sign the sign-in sheet each day that you climb.
2. Be sure to list both your own phone number and an "in case of emergency" number (new rule). The auto license number column can be used for this purpose, until new sheets are printed. (The value of the license number on the sheet is questionable, and may as well be eliminated.)
3. Except for practice areas where the leaders can easily keep an eye on all activities, always sign in and out on the route sheet (separate from the sign-in sheet) for every climb that you do.
4. Please keep the RCS Secretary/Treasurer informed of all address and/or phone number changes.

These rules are for the good of us all, and we thank you for your cooperation. JS

EDITORIAL - NORDIC SKIING AND THE SMS

For some time there has been pressure to get the SMS to relax its ban against Nordic equipment. This controversy is obscuring other more important issues.

The ban was originally imposed not only because light touring equipment generally available was felt to be unsuitable for mountaineering, but also because very few X-country skiers could pass the rather easy downhill skiing test required to qualify for SMS tours and membership. The test itself was imposed because it was found by experience that novice skiers often psych out on steep slopes, and are unable to ski down.

There are three aspects to this problem: the use of Nordic gear on Alpine "technical" tours, the use of Nordic gear on easier "non-technical" tours, and the admission of Nordic skiers to membership. This editorial is an attempt at an objective analysis of the issues involved.

Alpine Touring on Nordic Skis: Some members of SMS prefer recently-developed Nordic mountaineering gear for Alpine touring. There are technical differences between such equipment and commonly-sold light touring gear--the metal-edged skis are designed to turn downhill, and boots are designed to apply edging torque to the skis.

There are good reasons for considering this change. Some of our own members have crossed the Sierra using it. Using Nordic gear appears to be the future trend. For example, a Ramer-Trucker dealer has told your editor that sales of Alpine mountaineering gear are static, while sales of Nordic mountaineering gear are increasing. REI has many pairs of Nordic mountaineering skis for rent but only one or two pairs of Alpine touring skis. Professional skiers at Mammoth use Nordic equipment for mountaineering and for backcountry search and rescue.

Changing this rule will probably create a problem on checkout tours. If past experience is any guide, a number of Nordic skiers will show up who cannot ski downhill. The solution is evidently to be prepared to run two classes on any introductory tour -- a checkout class for those who can ski, and a training class for those who can't. This obviously takes at least twice as many leaders. Those who wish to modify the rules, therefore, need to be prepared to lead such training tours.

Nordic Touring: SMS does not need special leadership qualification procedures or a special safety policy to run such easy tours, for training or any other purpose. Under the chapter's current safety policy, Nordic skiing on flat terrain is considered winter hiking. The tours are not "technical", and are rated, and the leaders qualified, using the chapter-wide alphabet-soup "COIMET" system described in the Chapter Schedule. Theoretically, even the DPS can run a Nordic tour--if one does not mind cactus in the sitzmark.

Admission of Nordic Skiers to Membership: The above discussion assumes that except for a change in equipment rules, the objectives of the SMS remain the same as always: the enjoyment of skiing in the mountains, where downhill skiing is important, and that ability to ski downhill remains a qualification for advanced tours and for membership.

The creation of a new "Wilderness Skiing Section", as proposed elsewhere in this issue, is quite another matter. Such a section would presumably have members with no intention of learning to ski in the mountains. This proposal promises far more than a change in equipment: namely, a complete new program at a higher level than that offered by the Snow Touring Committee and the Singles Sections. Is there a specific plan for such a program?