



THE MUCCELNOOS

THIS IS THE LAST
ISSUE IF YOU DID
NOT RENEW

No. 576 -- December 16, 1980

A newsheet published by and for the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter since 1936. Send subscriptions and address changes to: Dove Menkes, 1550 S. Highland Ave, Apt D, Fullerton, Ca 92632. \$3 due in October. This issue is 4 pages.

BALDY HUT SURVIVES FIRE - - BARELY!

The Thanksgiving week forest fires did much publicized damage to several areas of Southern California. Receiving no publicity, however, was what was happening in Upper San Antonio Canyon of the Mt Baldy area fire. At first there was no danger to our beloved ski hut, located just below timberline at about 8,500' in the northeast corner of Upper San Antonio Canyon. The Thunder Mtn Fire, as it was called, was several miles to the south, and burning away from the hut location. Then, at the last minute a wind shift suddenly threatened lower San Antonio Canyon, then Icehouse Canyon (where several cabins were lost), then a "hot-shot crew" was rushed up to Snowcrest Lodge where quick felling of some trees and other critical defensive actions saved the Sierra Club Harwood Lodge.

Eyes turned northward, looking up the east slopes of Upper San Antonio Canyon: the whole area was ablaze. Hope for survival of the tiny hut perched in the center of the inferno was extremely dim. After the entire episode ended, heavy hearted members of the Ski Hut Management Committee proceeded to survey the damage. John Wedberg first flew over Baldy, swooping low down the canyon, and returned with a startling report: the Baldy Hut was still standing! The area all around was charred, but the hut was still there. Jim Powers went up on foot and reported both outhouses gone and the vegetation below the hut burned, but the Hut itself and the trees to the north and west untouched. Apparently the Hut's metal roof, plus a wind shift (probably strong currents blowing down from the Devils Backbone area) saved the structure. The fire roared easterly, climbing Mt Harwood's west flank before running out of fuel on its sparsely covered upper slope. That our hut is still there is nothing short of a miracle.

The San Antonio Ski Hut Management Committee wishes to make this announcement: The Baldy Hut is CLOSED FOR THE SEASON. With no sanitary facilities, no overnight accommodations can be afforded until at least one of the outhouses can be rebuilt. Continue to stay in touch with John Wedberg for possible one-day tours on Baldy this spring. Having said all of the above, now let me hold out a ray of hope: If enough volunteers come forth in the next few weeks to haul supplies and help in the construction, the Baldy Hut might yet be reopened in time for some trips starting in January. Contact John Wedberg 472-6768 (before 8:00 PM please) to lend your services. (JW)

R C S ANNOUNCES TRAINING CLASSES

The following dates are announced for practice climbs at which RCS qualified instructors will be present for formalized training sessions for beginning rock climbers:

<u>DATES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Jan 10, 1981	Stony Point (Chatsworth)
Jan 25, 1981	Stony Point
Feb 7, 1981	Stony Point
Feb 22, 1981	Rubidoux (Riverside)
Mar 8, 1981	Rubidoux
Mar 21, 1981 **	Fossil Falls (Little Lake)
Mar 22, 1981 **	Fossil Falls

** -- Bus trip for students

Starting time: Students 8:30 AM, instructors 7:30 AM
The success of our training program depends on the support of RCS members and other qualified instructors. Your continuing support will be appreciated. (LR)

MUGELNOOS STAFF

EDITOR John Ledberg
MUGELGRAPHER still looking
MUGELMAILER Dove Menkes
REPORTERS: Steve Wilkie, LeRoy Russ
Don Pies, Jim McPherson, Tom
Duryea, Barbara Lilley, R.D. Evelyn

JOSHUA TREE

The annual J. Tree snowstorm was de-
layed this year so we had fine wea-
ther for our Thanksgiving weekend
climb. Many thanks to Jim Erb for
filling in as trip leader on Fri
and assistant leader on Sat.

NEXT EDITOR: R. J. SECOR
2366 Las Lunas
Pasadena 91107
(213) 795-5520

NEXT ISSUE: Jan 20, 1981
DEADLINE : Wednesday, Jan 16

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: 3rd Tues of ea
month, 7:30 PM, Dept of Water &
Power aud, 111 N Hope, downtown LA
Free parking. Program, refreshmts,
fellowship. Everyone welcome!! For
ski mntrg eqpmt talk, come @ 7:00.

Sat was the most active day with
28 climbers signing in and 22 rtes
being climbed, including the infa-
mous waterchute on Intersection
Rock (Greg Stevens & Paul Harris).
The prize for the busiest weekend
goes to Mike Baca & John Conrad who
did Black Tide, Double Dip, The
Flake, Overhang Bypass, Headstone,
and Tie Jam on Sat & Sun (Mike had
warmed up on North Overhang & the
Bat Crack on Fri). Iann Lynn led
the watercourse Sun evening and
got credit for a rescue on the
Southeast corner route in process.
We had the largest campsight re-
served at Sheep Pass but still ov-
terfilled its parkinglot. Fortunate-
ly the rangers were busy elsewhere
both evenings. Next year we should
try to reserve two sights.

CALENDAR

- Dec 28 Local Ski Tour - Secor
- Jan 2-4 SMS Avalance seminar
- Jan 17-18 Skiing @ Mammoth, checkout
- Jan 20 MUGELNOOS MEETING
- Jan 10 Practice rock climb,
Stony Point
- Jan 25 Practice rock climb,
Stony Point
- Jan 24-25 SMS Ski training, Keller
- Jan 31-Feb 1 SMS Ski training, camp

Jane Clark sprained her ankle in
a leader fall Sat AM. Andy Fried
took her in to Joshua Tree to have
it X-rayed and she was back in cp
Sat night. Early accts of the fall
were sketchy but after a few cups
of wine around the campfire the de-
tails began to get filled in. The
flwg is a much abbreviated summary
as best I can remember it. It
seems the crux of the climb (almost
certainly a 1st ascent) involved a
5.11 overhang at least 30 ft from
her last protection. There was
some mention of an earthquake while
she was making the crux move which
was actually the cause of the fall.
The fall was broken when she landed
on a pair of mating chuckwallas,
thereby escaping more serious in-
jury (it wasn't clear what happen-
ed to the chuckwallas). (JM)

NEW RCS MEMBER

John Peters
2131 Valley Dr
Manhattan Beach 90266
(213) 379-9522

NEW RCS QUALIFIED LEADERS

- Tom Jeter
- Jim McPherson
- Paul Morrill
- Greg Stevens

SMS OSTRANDER SKI TRIPS

Due to scheduling problems, the two
ski tours to the Ostrander Hut have
been changed as follows:

- Old date: Jan 10-11
New date: Feb 21-22
- Old date: Feb 7-9
New date: Feb 21-22

Contact Tom Duryea for further info
11441 Asher St #62
El Monte 91732
(213) 448-5373 (home)
686-1612 (work)

A SUGGESTION

To help reduce future errors and mis-
understandings regarding SMS member-
ship it is suggested that the prac-
tice of mailing the SMS Membership
Directory with an issue of Mugelnoos
be resumed. This would be more econ-
omical as well. In the case of elec-
tions the new SMS by-laws specifi-
cally require that ballots for SMS
elections be mailed with the March
issue of Mugelnoos, and thus

(cont'd)

A SUGGESTION - Cont'd

members will be immediately aware
if they have been overlooked and
can contact the Election Committee
for their ballots.

It may be interesting to note
that a record 22 SMS members, in-
cluding five recently active qual-
ified leaders, did indeed not re-
new their Mugelnoos subscriptions/
SMS membership for 1980. (BJL)

LIAT'S NEW AT MAMMOTH FOR '80-81

New this season at Mammoth Mountain
are two new chairs, #20 and 21.
#20 parallels #4, and #21 parallels
#10. The operator at the top of 21
will be able to check on activities
at the bottom thru a closed circuit
TV setup. Also new for this season
will be a limitation on the number
of lift tickets sold; they're talk-
ing about 16,000 per day limit.

MORE ON SAFETY ISSUES: ROCK FALL

(In response to concern expressed by the RCS that there appears to be more rock fall accidents involving beginners than seasoned climbers, the Training Manual will be revised to include a discussion of this subject. The following copy of this new revision is published in Mugelnoos to serve as a safety reminder.)

--ROCK FALL

Climbing in areas with loose rock presents a potentially disastrous situation. Nevertheless, experienced climbers who exercise the proper precautions may climb in these areas with a reasonable level of safety.

First, climb with the basic idea you will not knock any rocks loose, even when no one is below. Next, find all loose rocks with your eyes and hands before your feet find them. Hit flakes with the butt of your hand and avoid pulling on hollow sounding ones. Do not assume a block will happily resist your tug because it is big and has probably sat there forever. When there is no alternative but to climb on obviously loose rock, all hand and foot placements must be made in a manner to push the rock into its naturally locked position. While traveling across these loose areas, direct belay ropes and rappel ropes to avoid dislodging additional rocks.

If your partner above yells, "Rock!" on a steep fifth class route, protect yourself the best you can but do not look up. More gradual third and fourth class climbs break the speed of rocks and allow the climber time to look out for rocks and more from their path. If the situation has been judged that the belayer has a higher chance of being hit by a falling rock than the climber taking a fall, a slack anchor may be warranted to give the belayer freedom to dodge rocks. Of course helmets are good practice, but they are usually needed when someone has not been careful. (DP)

MORE ON THE BALDY HUT

(Ed note: This space was reserved for listing the 1981 Mugeleitors, but the Christmas mail failed to reach us by deadline; thus, we are happy for this opportunity to present Steve Wilkie's comments about the recent forest fire.)

It seems a miracle, but the San Antonio Ski hut is still intact after a forest fire driven by 90 MPH winds swept down through the area. Both of the outdoor privies were consumed by the fire. The pine covered flat northwest of the hut is scarcely touched, but the hollow southeast of the hut suffered a very intense burn due no doubt to gasoline fed flames from the burning toilet being driven down the slope by the wind. All of the younger trees in the hollow and on the ridge south of the hut have been reduced to fire-blackened skeletons. Even the rocks are blackened. The huge fir tree just south of the hut has all the needles burned off the uphill side, and the rest of the needles are scorched to a dirty straw color. The large tree south of the front of the hut which was hollow or rotted within, burned inside until it fell.

It was noted that the kitchen cabinet was littered with ashes blown in around the window sash. Also there was a curious wavy crack in the glass believed to have been caused by expansion due to the heat of the fire. Poking about in the ruins it was discovered that the cans of gasoline stored in the privy had not exploded, because the pouring spouts were only soldered on, so that as the heat of the fire melted the solder, the spout and its screw cap came loose, relieving the pressure.

For reasons of sanitation the hut is closed to use until a new privy can be built. To save time, all materials for a new toilet will be cut to size down in the valley so that they will be ready to nail together as soon as they arrive at the hut location.

In addition to Wedberg's number noted in the Page 1 article, the Chairman of the Hut Management Committee is Jim Powers, who now lives in Sierra Madre. His number is (213) 335-7462. (SW)

A LESSON IN DOWNCLIMBING

Some of us have the strangest adventures while on vertical terrain. This one may be of interest to you. While some of the RCS'ers were whooping it up at the RCS Octoberfest, three of us decided to take on the White Maiden's Walkaway.

While eating lunch at the top of the Northwest Buttress, a passing climber, Dick Sikes, whom many of you know, graciously described a section of the route I couldn't remember. Along with his route description, we heard stories about climbers getting lost on the Maiden. We needed that.

Our adventure started when I was at the top of the 6th pitch (between -4- and -5- on the topo map) and Diana Esch was anchored to that big tree just above "Doubtful Corner" below me. She was belaying our 3rd climber who was coming up the chute just below the traverse when he announced that he could not climb any further. We could not see him; nor would we have been able to haul him up and across the traverse. In his fear he forgot how to prussic up a rope. Since it was 4 AM we decided to abort the climb.

Our first task was to get our thoroughly frightened climber down to the next belay stance. Toward that end, Diana tied off the other climber while I down climbed to her using a self-belay technique. This consisted of passing my rope thru an anchor just above me and connecting a prussic sling from my seat harness to the rope between the anchor and Diana. Then as I descended, I slid the prussic down the rope. When I ran out of available rope, I anchored in, pulled the rope thru the anchor above me and repeated the process. In this manner I was able to descend very rapidly. The disadvantage, of course, is that one must leave those self-belay anchors up there.

Once I got to Diana, our other climber had calmed down somewhat and we were able to belay (lower) him down to the ledge below. After Diana overcame her own fear, crossed the traverse and descended the chute to the ledge, I zipped down that pitch using my self-belay. Since this pitch has a 10-foot traverse, I placed a chock at the corner above the chute and passed my end of the belay thru it to discourage a possible pendulum onto the sheer face to our left.

For the next two pitches the other two climbers were well anchored to the belay points, so we tied the two ropes together and I was able to use the self-belay in one pass. I found that I had to use a second sling to pass around the junction of the two ropes when it came by me.

At this time it was pitch dark. However, having remembered my East Lark adventure, I had an Early Winters flashlight with me. (Diana now believes everyone should carry one at Tahquitz.) Using it, we rappelled down the face, bypassing the last two pitches, with an intermediate stop at a nondescript ledge with a rather nice tree on it. As I stepped out of the rappell brake I noticed the time: 7:30 PM. We had descended 6 pitches in about half the time we had taken to climb them. By using the self-belay technique, we avoided becoming another group of climbers getting lost on the Maiden. (RPD)

THE HIGH COST OF CLIMBING -- 10 YEARS AGO

The following is from the book, "You're Standing On My Fingers!", by H. Warren Lewis. It attempts to explain climbing to the general public, but inadvertantly also includes this lesson in economics:

For the year 1969-70, the dozen basic items total \$400:

Mountaineering boots, \$35	Frame pack, \$40	2-man tent, \$100
Down sleeping bag, \$80	Foam pad, \$10	Stove & gas, \$15
120' rope, 7/16ths, \$25	Hard hat, \$15	Pitons & hammer, \$20
6 biners, slings \$20	Ice ax \$20	Crampons & straps \$20