

World Wide Web Address: <http://www.climber.org/pcs>

Next General Meeting

Date: Tuesday, February 9

Time: 8:00 PM

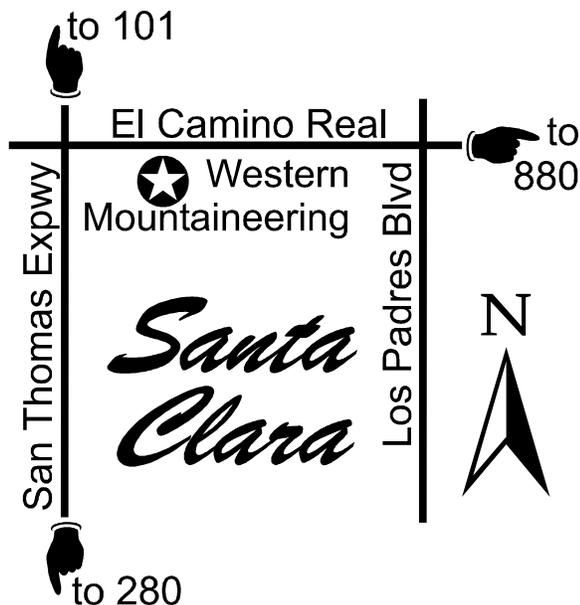
Program: Mont Blanc, The Matterhorn, Eiger

Location: Western Mountaineering, Santa Clara

See slides on a trip Bob Suzuki, David Harris and Bruce Bousfield took to Switzerland last summer. They climbed Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, and tried for a route on the Eiger (not the North face!) but got stopped by weather. However they still climbed two other mountains right next to the Eiger (Jungfrau and Monch).

2344 El Camino Real, Santa Clara (between San Thomas and Los Padres), parking in the rear.

From 101: Exit at San Thomas Expressway, Go South to El Camino Real. Turn left and the Western Mountaineering will be immediately to your right.



Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 2/21/99 Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.

Wilderness First Aid

To help trip leaders and would-be leaders get the required First Aid certificate, the Chapter sponsors a First Aid class each quarter, based on a nationally recognized first aid text, but with added material and emphasis on wilderness situations with no phone to dial 911. The next First Aid classes will be Saturday, February 20 and Sunday, February 21 at the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto (from Bayshore/Hwy. 101 at San Antonio, turn toward the Bay; turn left at 1st stoplight, then right at Corporation Way to park behind PCC). Class is 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (1 hour for your bag lunch) and is limited to 12 people. To sign up, send choice of day, and a check for \$38 with a stamped, self-addressed business-sized envelope to: Health Education Services, 200 Waverly, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Cancellations get partial refund if a substitute attends (you get to keep the Wilderness First Aid book). For more information, call 650-321-6500.

• Marg Ottenberg

Official (PCS) Trips

PCS trips must be submitted through the Scheduler (see back cover for details). Trips not received from the Scheduler will be listed as PRIVATE, without recourse.

Pyramid Peak

Peak: Pyramid Peak, Class 2 - 9,983'
 Date: February 13/14/15 Saturday-Monday
 Leader: Palmer Dyal, H: 650-941-5321
 pdyal@msn.com

Co-Leader: Wanted
 Topo: Pyramid Peak 7.5'

This will be a moderately-paced 3 mile snowshoe trip to climb a relatively easy peak in the Desolation Wilderness area southwest of Lake Tahoe. The elevation gain is about 1000' per mile and we plan to camp at tree line.

We will have time to build snow caves on the first day and view the marvelous glaciated scenery of the whole Tahoe basin from the peak on the second day.

There will be a choice of returning on Sunday or Monday depending on the weather, etc. This will be a good trip for beginning climbers.

Anza Borrego Climb

December 1998

Ten miles north of Bridgeport, Pat Callery and I awoke after a restful night in the sagebrush to gray skies from horizon to horizon. Throwing our wet sleeping bags in the car, we drove down to the familiar trailhead at Twin Lakes, where we were soon joined by Jim Curl, Dot Reilly, Milushe Kudrnovska, and trip leader Kai Wiedman. It was early Saturday morning on Memorial Day weekend and time for another one of Kai's assaults on the Sawtooth Ridge.

Borrego Palm Canyon is a magical place. It is an oasis in the desert. It is a swath of green among rocks and sand. Over 1000 native fan palms (*Washingtonia folifera*) grace the canyon with their gray/green fronds. Beneath them water flows amid the welcome shade. Here also are surprises: deciduous sycamores and alders among the expected desert willow.

All this beauty is found at Anza Borrego State Park two hours east of San Diego. Between Christmas and New Year's Richard Stover, Patricia Crane, and I climbed 3960' Indianhead Peak the long way beginning the climb by hiking 2.5 miles up Borrego Palm Canyon. There is an excellent trail for the first 1.5 miles, a fair use trail the next mile up the canyon. Then it's boulder hopping and cactus/agave dodging for the 1400' climb up the ridge to the 3200' saddle. From there it's a puzzle of boulder scrambling and route finding to the relatively flat summit which offers a spectacular view of California's Colorado desert, the Salton Sea on the eastern horizon, irrigated ag. land, irreverent development and the campground below.

We descended on the well traveled DPS direct route which turned out to have far fewer agave lying in wait than reported in the DPS guide. In all the climb took 11 hours since we had a few route finding delays in the canyon and a one hour detour caused by ascending the wrong side of the ridge heading toward the 3200' saddle. We carried 2 liters of water apiece and replenished one empty bottle each before we left the main canyon and our last water. By hike's end we had finished all 3 liters and were grateful for the water fountain at the trailhead.

Earlier that week we were joined by Jackie Stroud of Sacramento for our climbs of Jacumba and Sombrero. Jacumba (4512') is more of a hill climb at the end of a mogul-filled, high clearance dirt road. The view from the summit into the Carriso Gorge affords glimpses of the fabulous San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railroad. The only excitement came at the end of the hike when I stepped on a large boulder which rolled, throwing me into a yucca bayonet which deeply pierced my underarm. Either the yucca injects an anesthetic-like agent or the spine hit a nerve, because my arm felt numb after the incident. The initial pain was considerable.

Sombrero (4229'), while not difficult, is quite satisfying, particularly the rock scrambling at the summit. On the desert floor at 800' the chuparosa was in bloom attracting numerous bees and hummingbirds. The desert lavender (my favorite) was starting to show bits of deep violet. Canyon wrens sang melodiously as we climbed. What a wonderful Christmas vacation!

• *Debbie Bulger*

A Snowshoe Field Test

To follow up on my request for opinions on snowshoes, I took two different pairs of snowshoes on the Freel Peak trip in mid December. For a true head-to-head test, I did all my snowshoeing that weekend with an **MSR (Denali Lama)** on one foot and an **Atlas** (smallest size mountaineering model) on the other. I hiked

both with and without a full pack. This was my second time ever on snowshoes.

My primary impression was that they were surprisingly similar in overall performance. I didn't have to step differently with my two feet. And when I was "skiing" down steep powdery sections, there was no performance difference between them. Flotation was very similar.

There were some minor differences. The **MSR** is noisier on crusty snow and is a bit more "klunky". But when traversing a hardpacked slope, the MSR gripped much better due to its full length rails. This was the biggest difference, and an important one in my mind. I didn't test the MSR add-on tails.

Caveat: I didn't test for durability, and I did not get to test in all possible snow conditions.

Many thanks to Dot and Nancy for making this test possible.

• *Kelly Maas*

Davis in December

December 28, 1999

Mt Davis, at 12311', is a class 2 lump in the shadow of great peaks like Ritter/Banner, Lyell, etc. According to the register, it's mostly climbed in August and September. Apparently almost as many people from out of state make their way there as do the locals, which is quite surprising. After a busy December full of overeating and socializing, Craig Taylor, Hal Tompkins, and I headed up the Rush Creek trail (from the June Lake Loop) on 12/28/98 for one last peak of the year and a bit of winter solitude. We saw no one once we lost sight of the road.

Craig had contacted an east-side guide who warned us there was no snow, and indeed we walked to Gem Lake at 9000' barely needing gaiters. On the other hand, the rest of our route was snowy enough to make skis or snowshoes useful (we had a mix). There was a lot of breakable windslab that made the skiing less than perfect but there was also a 2-mile flat run across Thousand Island Lake that made the snowshoers jealous. The snowpack was surprisingly heavy in the valleys given that all the ridges and faces were patchy to bare. Up high it's a great area for intermediate skiers, and there were lots of roped ice climbers near the road.

The first day, we chopped a hole in the ice near the outlet of Thousand Island for water, and made camp as darkness fell. Overnight it dipped to zero degrees, but the next day temperatures were in the 50s as we covered easy terrain to the peak in perfect weather. No significant wind, no clouds, no deep powder, no ice. We could have left all the heavy clothes and crampons and ice axes at home! We saw no evidence of any cornices, slumps, or avalanches on any slopes. It's a dry year.

We all summited in thin shirts with no gloves, only a week after the winter solstice. The toughest part of the climb, other than the slog back across the lake, was the bare boulder field you have to traverse just north of North Glacier Pass - Hal bypassed it on the way down by skiing a chute down to Lake Catherine but it didn't really save time. (OK, I suppose hoisting the packs over those spiky gates on the Gem Lake spillway had objective danger, but we rated it no more than class 3 and we didn't rope up.)

Winter can be cruel, but [insert politically correct deity or deities here] arranged a very nice weather window for us. Clouds on the way out never turned into a storm, it was so warm that Gem Lake ice was groaning like whale song, and we had dry empty roads for driving home.

• *Steve Eckert*

ADVANCED TRIPS LIST

February		
13-15 (President day weekend)	Red Slate (ski/snowshoe)	Steve Eckert, Tim Hult
13-15 (President day weekend)	Pyramid Peak	Palmer Dyal
13-15 (President day weekend)	Any Mountain	Aaron Schuman
March		
14 (Sunday)	Roundtop (winter day hike)	George Van Gordon, Arun Mahajan
21 (Sunday)	Mt Sizer (Henry Coe, day hike)	Nancy Fitzsimmons
26-28	Death Valley Trip (Back Pack)	Bill Kirkpatrick, Nancy Fitzsimmons
April		
2-4	Sawtooth, Spanish Needle, Rockhouse	Bob Suzuki, Rich Leiker
3-4	Lassen, Brockoff	Ron Karpel
3-5	Shasta	George Van Gordon
16-18	Black Mountain, Diamond Peak	Steve Eckert, Aaron Schuman
24-25	Lassen	George Van Gordon
24-25	Yosemite Valley (class-3/4 climbs)	George Sinclair
May		
1-2	Shasta	Ron Karpel
1-2	Moser, Maggie, Taylor, Siretta	Bob Suzuki, Rich Leiker
8-9	Mt Gorgonio	George Van Gordon
15-16 (weather delays 1 week)	Mt Tinemaha	Steve Eckert
23 (Sunday)	Crevasse Rescue Practice	Kelly Mass
29-31 (Memorial Day)	Stanford and Morgan	Steve Eckert, Charles Schafer
29-31 (Memorial Day)	Shasta (via Bolam Glacier)	George Van Gordon
29-31 (Memorial Day)	Rainier	Ron Karpel, Nancy Fitzsimmons
June		
11-13	Williamson	Kelly Mass, Ron Karpel
19-20	Goethe, Emerson	Aaron Schuman
19-20	Royce Pk and Merriam Pk	Steve Eckert
July		
3	Snake Dike (Half Dome)	Ron Karpel
3-5 (July 4 th weekend)	Middle Pal	Kelly Mass
3-5 (July 4 th weekend)	Tower Peak	Charles Schafer
3-11 (July 4 th week)	Taboose Pass Climb-O-Rama	Steve Eckert, Bob Suzuki
17-18	Matterhorn, Whorl	Ron Karpel
17-25	North Kaweah	Charles Schafer
23-26	Finger Pk and Tunemah Pk	Steve Eckert, Erik Siering
24-25	Conness	Bob Suzuki, Bonnie
26-31	Ritter, Banner	Alan Ritter
30-August 2	Whitney, Russell	Ron Karpel, Nancy Fitzsimmons
31-August 1	Palisade Crest	Peter Maxwell
31-August 1	Bear Creek Spire (Class-4)	Bob Suzuki, Jim Ramaker

August		
early august	Whaleback, Glacier, Picket, Kern, North Guard	Steve Eckert (joining Secor's 2-week trip??)
7-14	Fiske, Huxley, Black Giant ...	Bob Suzuki, Charles Schafer
13-16	Hilgard, Recess, Gabb	Steve Eckert
16 ... 20	TBD in Colorado	Ron Karpel, George Van Gordon
21-22	Red Slate (North Couloir)	Charles Schafer
28-29	Winchell, Agassiz	Bob Suzuki, Nancy Fitzsimmons
September		
3-6 (Labor Day)	Pettit, Piute, Volunteer	Steve Eckert
4-6 (Labor Day)	Middle Pal, Norma Clyde	Bob Suzuki, Rich Leiker
11-12	Clarence King	Aaron Schuman
17-18	Needham and Sawtooth	Steve Eckert
17-19	TBD	Peter Maxwell
26	Dana Couloir	Ron Karpel
October		
2-3	Tuolumne Peak (car camp)	Debbie Benham
2-3	Kern Peak	Steve Eckert (SPS list finish)

Unofficial Trips

Private trips may be submitted directly to the Scree Editor, but are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS members.

Red Slate

Peak: Red Slate Mtn (13163) Class 2 / snow
 Dates: Feb 13-15 (Sat-Mon)
 Map: Mt Morrison 15' quad
 Contact: Steve Eckert <eckert@climber.org>
 650-508-0500

Co-Contact: Tim Hult <timdhult@aol.com>

Secor notes that this is the highest peak north of Mt Abbot, and calls it "a big pile of rubble" with "a swell view". When it's covered with snow WHO CARES if it's a pile of rubble? The view still works!

We'll probably go up Convict Creek, bypassing Lake Dorothy in favor of Lake Witsonaupah but McGee Creek is an option. From Convict, we can stay on or near a ridge for the steepest part (the approach to Gemini Pass on the west ridge of Red Slate). If conditions are perfect, this might be a two day trip, but I'm assuming three days with an early return on day 3. Skis or snowshoes could work. This is not a beginner's trip: shovel, avalanche beacon, experience required.

Mt. Reba

Peak: Mt. Reba
 Date: March 6-7
 Leader: George Van Gorden, 408-779-2320, before 9PM

Mt. Reba is near Bear Valley ski area. From the road the elevation gain is just over 1000 feet, but we will travel along a long ridge and the looking is good. We will meet at the end of highway 4 on Sat. at 12:00. We will ski or snowshoe in a short distance and make camp and then we can start having fun. For those interested in skiing, this area provides some good intermediate terrain.

Telescope Peak via Surprise Canyon,

Peaks: Telescope Peak
 Dates: March 26, 27, 28
 Maps: Telescope Peak
 Contacts: Bill Kirkpatrick, W (408) 279-3450;
 H (408) 293-2447, Wmkirk@earthlink.net
 Nancy Fitzsimmons, h 408-957-0983,
 w 408-495-1761, pkclimber@aol.com.

In this trip we will experience the western side of the Panamints. We will form up early on Friday, March 26, in Ballarat, motor up to Chris Wicht Camp and park. Then we backpack up Surprise Canyon on what's left of a miner's road to Panamint City, which is what is left of a miner's camp. On Saturday we will gain the ridge of the Panamints and climb to the top of Telescope. Sunday we walk back to the cars. This is likely to be a very demanding trip, with a total elevation gain of nearly 9,000 feet in two days.

Broad Peak Expedition!

Peak: Broad Peak 26,400 ft
 Dates: June-July 1999
 Contact: Tom Masterson
 masterst@ucsu.colorado.edu
 phone, fax (303) 499-6363
 address: 250 - 31st Street, Boulder, CO 80303

We are a Boulder based group seeking to add 3-4 more members to our June-July 1999 expedition to attempt the standard route on Broad Peak.

This is a non-commercial, non-guided, non-profit expedition! Price-wise, it is a great deal: Land costs should be about \$3800, plus airfare of 1200-1500. We want to put together a Colorado-based team, so that we can climb together this winter & spring, get to know each other and get used to climbing with each other. Experience climbing over 20,000 ft very helpful. For more information call Tom Masterson at 303 499-6363 or Mike Marsh at 303 499 3395.

Southern Sierra Day Hikes

Peaks: Spanish Needle, 7,851 ft
Sawtooth Peak, 8,000 ft
Rockhouse Peak, 8,383 ft

Dates: April 2-4

Contacts: Bob Suzuki (408) 259-0772 (H)
(510) 657-7555 (W)
Rich Leiker (510) 792-4816 (H)
(408) 453-4253 (W) after 4pm

Shake off that winter rust for an early season trip into the southern Sierra. We'll be climbing each peak as a day hike and car camping at night.

Mt Tinemaha

Peak: Mt Tinemaha (12,561) Class 2 / snow

Dates: May 15-16 (Sat-Sun) (weather may delay by a week)

Map: Big Pine 15' topo

Contact: Steve Eckert <eckert@climber.org>
650-508-0500

Tired of every trip requiring lots of experience? Want to get out in the spring snow, but don't have a long resume? This is the trip you've been waiting for! We'll pack from about 6500 to about 10500', a long day, starting on trail and probably finishing on snow.

It's not steep and I don't expect ice axes will be required. The peak itself probably WILL require an ice axe, but won't be hard climbing (Secor rates it Class 1 in the summer).

Only 2000' of gain on summit day leaves us some time to review ice axe and snow travel techniques, but THIS IS NOT A CLASS. I'll be happy to share what I know and to discuss what you know, and I'll even watch if you want to practice, but you should have taken a class or read Freedom of the Hills or had some experience with the axe before you come.

Sign up at your own risk. See required waiver at:
<http://www.climber.org/eckert/LiabilityWaiver.pdf>

If you've never climbed with me before you should check out
<http://www.climber.org/eckert/ClimberExpectations-SRE.txt>

Taboose: Climb-O-Rama '99

Peaks: Wynne, Pinchot, Pyramid, Striped, Goodale, Cardinal, Ruskin, Pinchot, Marion, State, Prater, Observation

Dates: July 3-11 (Sat-Sun, July 4th week)

Contacts: Steve Eckert <eckert@climber.org>
650-508-0500
Bob Suzuki, bobszk@bigfoot.com

We're planning another Climb-O-Rama for peakbaggers who just can't live with only one peak per day. This year's trip features fewer campsites (we hope to spend two nights in the same place several times) and more seldom visited peaks (probably including some first ascents of the year) and you get at least one peak every day, but the first one.

It's a 9 day trip but all the peaks except Observation fit into an 8 day schedule (spare day for weather!) with no day over 12 miles and only one day over 5000'. You can skip a peak now and then to relax, or skip entire days by leaving the group and joining us later. Send \$10 (payable to Steve Eckert and refunded less permit fees if you show up at the trailhead) with any requests you have for peaks we forgot (be prepared to lead or solo). Tell us as much as you can about your skill and conditioning. We'll collect names and decide in a month or so about the exact schedule and trip roster. In addition, we'll need

a signed copy of this liability waiver:
<http://www.climber.org/eckert/LiabilityWaiver.pdf>

Nepal October 1999

Peak: Chulu West

Date: October 1999

Contact: Warren Storkman
4180 Mackay Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94306
Phone 650-493-8959
FAX 650-493-8975
warren@climber.org

Climb or Trek, We'll combine both for the ultimate adventure.

The trekking peak is Chulu West 21,750 ft. (6630 m). Its rating classifies it as moderate -difficult. Chulu West is on the Annapurna circuit, north of the village of Braga. After the climb we pass over the Thorung La Pass (17,700 ft)

Our walk down to beautiful Muktinath brings us to a Hindu religious setting. You'll see many older Indians from India who made this arduous journey. Most of the older people consider this visit the fulfillment of their religious life.

Before reaching Jomson Airport There will be a side trip to Kagbeni, A village that lost its way in time.

Its a 19 day trek from Besisahar, return from Jomson

	Trekkers	Climbers
A) Trek Cost	\$1235	\$1330
B) Internal bus & Air	\$180	\$180
C) Sherpa -walk-in W/food, equip etc.	\$55	\$55
D) Climbing Sherpa / Ins 3 persons @ \$27		\$90
E) Permit fee 10 persons @ \$350		\$35
Total Cost	\$1470	\$1690

D and E could swing a little either way.

B could swing a little also.

Thai Air \$1200 from San Francisco.

I'm only the facilitator, you pay the provider.

The Coming Millennium Celebration

Peak: Kilimanjaro 19,340 Uhuru Peak.

Date: Jan 12, 2000

Contact: Warren Storkman
4180 Mackay Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94306
Phone 650-493-8959
FAX 650-493-8975
warren@climber.org

Visit Africa for a walk-up of one of the seven continental summits. We'll leave San Francisco January 12th 2000 arriving in Arusha, Tanzania. This special package of 4 hotel nights plus 6 nights on the mountain is around \$1000 1998 prices. The prices should hold for 2000.

The standard package is for 2 hotel and 4 hut nights.

Why longer for us? Jet lag and acclimatization . We are looking for better than the average success rate. 20% not good enough.

K.L.M. Air looks attractive. '98/'99 price \$1240.00

San Francisco to Kilimanjaro Airport.

We have 26 persons with a strong commitment. Lets make it a century for the millennium.

Yosemite Valley Peak Climb

Peak: Grizzly Peak, Sierra Point, Mt. Broderick, Liberty Cap, and Eagle Peak.
Date: April 24-25
Contact: George Sinclair 650-941-2160; geosinc@aol.com

Spend the weekend climbing some "peaks" about Yosemite Valley, including Grizzly Peak, Sierra Point, Mt. Broderick, Liberty Cap, and Eagle Peak. Some climbs will involve class 4 climbing.

Avenue Of The Volcanoes

Ice climbing on the Equator

During the period of December 19th thru January 12th I traveled to Quito to try some of the peaks that had tantalized me on my previous climbs in 1996. The plan was to team up with my friend and Guide from Bolivia, Yossi Brain. Yossi in addition to being the "Mainman" in La Paz, is also an accomplished journalist and author of the Bolivian Climbing Guide and Bolivian Trekking Guide (Try Chessler Books, buy two!). Yossi and I both had similar peak lists, with Yossi's list came pressure from his publisher to get the routes documented for his forthcoming Guide to Ecuadorian Mountaineering. In a general sense my plan was to climb on technical routes only. Ecuador has a reputation for walkup climbing, and if you do what most folks do, bag Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, and the other commonly climbed peaks, that's what you'll get. However, there is a lot of difficult technical climbing available if you want it, and that was my plan for this trip.

I dug in at the Magic Bean in the center of Quito, and sorted out gear and shopped for food and fuel on the first day. For those who haven't been to Quito its worth pointing out that this section of town is hot and hoppin in a big way: Bars, Cyber Cafes, Dinner spots, Outfitters, Shops, and lots of climbers from all over the world. Its common to be on the side of some 18,000 ft peak in the morning and be back at your hotel room and in the discos by nightfall. All night Lavanderias allowed me to return from one peak, unpack, wash clothes, and be packed again for a morning departure to another peak.

When I arrived in Quito Yossi was guiding one of the trade routes (Cotopaxi) for Safari Ecuador, so I took a jaunt off to Machachi the morning after my arrival to do an acclimitization peak. The new Electric trolley in Quito cranks up about 6am and I was on the way to Terminal Terrestie where the buses to Machachi (and everywhere else) depart. After a 2 Km hike I was in the foothills of El Corazon and promptly stopped by hacienda owners who firmly reminded me that they owned the immediate time zone and all the drainages therein. Sweet talk, extended chewing of the fat, and some promises not to torch the parjamo, bought my passage through. All that remained was 1000 meters of Ichigrass and 100 meters of class 3 rock. With zilch acclimitization time under my belt the last bits hurt more than they should of, so I bagged some sleep on the summit and returned to The Magic Bean. Yossi was there having just dropped off a note, asking "Where are you?". Not that I could possibly have the same question of him, being 6 foot tall with blond hair down to his arse, he can be seen from low earth orbit among the stout locals.

Blending in is just not Yossi's style anyway. We hooked up with Ray a teacher at the Collegio Americana and made some plans to hit the direct face of Illiniza Sur, an infrequently climbed route lately, consisting of 60-80 degree ice for half a dozen pitches. Somewhere in here I bagged another couple of peaks, Guagua Pichincha, and Padre Incantato using the same Electric trolley-to-

bus scam. An additional taxi to the town of Lloa was needed, along with traction encouragement for the driver (mas altura, mas altura!). I eventually did Guagua three times during this trip, being there once for an eruption of this fickle volcano. This peak was used as filler between larger peaks, and with 1000 meters of hiking from the village outskirts it served to keep the legs tight as well. The refugio on this peak makes a nice penthouse for any andinista wishing to avoid the inevitable debauchery of Quito night life. I kept myself pure and unsullied with these hikes to 4800M, also a bit bored.

The road to the Illinizas is probably worse than no road at all, but it offers a good prelude to the sandy 500m slogfest that leads to the Col. At 3am or so we started up the ancient and rocky black ice of Illinza Sur's Ruta Directo. This was Ice that was about as bad as it gets, and I mean bad as in not good. At some point in this climb I actually stopped swinging my picks all together, just sort of leaning on them for balance while I stuck my crampons with as much authority as I could muster.

Belay stances were chopped and insured with screws, Yossi lead the way and actually enjoyed displacing his own body weight in dinner plates with each perch. Ray and I were standing less than two feet apart near the 80 degree crux, but Ray seemed to have some sort of magical magnetic power which attracted banquet sized platters of rotten ice. He must have been hit twenty times for each tiny bit that found me. I actually moved closer to him out of guilt, but Yossi's target zone just shrunk. The trip off the summit was in a total fog, thru, under, around and into huge crevasses and down endless 45 degree slopes with just enough slimy snow to prevent facing downhill. I got a stiff neck from looking through my legs at where the hell I was going. Gapers on the adjoining walkup of Illinza Norte served as a gallery and were quite generous in their approval. Although I was later to take heat from local guides for the 10 hour time span of the climb. This was, however a good start to the climbing, with only a week gone I had four acclimitization peaks of about 16,000 ft completed and one of the most technical climbs in the area under my belt.

Must have been another one of the filler trips to Guagua in here, then it was off to El Altar by way of Riobamba. Yossi had plans for several of the summits on El Altar, and we brought enough food at the Supermaxi to open our own at Campo Italiano. Campo Italiano proved to be too good for us, so we scrambled to a boulder field where we pitched our tent on terrain that might have been used for lunar landing exercises.

Part of Yossi's scheme to get ever closer to the peaks we intended to do after El Obispo, which is the highest peak in the El Altar Massif. Obispo is also billed as the most difficult and technical major summit in Ecuador. El Obispo proved to be every bit as nasty and scary as it was said to be.

Off at 2am for the summit we lost an amiable Ecuadorian doctor friend on the second pitch up the glacier. He looked up at the massive icewall from across the gentle lower glacier and said "No Way!". Ray, Yossi, and I made our way to the hidden and rather wonderful couloir which leads to the upper seracfalls. This couloir was really nice ice, the best of the whole trip, and at three pitches of 70 degrees plus was good enough to deserve us a round of Choco-chips and Banana Chifle at its top. From here 50 degree climbing of indiscriminate nature led to a huge serac wall, around which we found a narrow, steep and rotten gully which might have reminded me of a Scottish gully I once climbed, but it didn't because I've never been to Scotland. The rock on top of El Obispo is so lousy I actually used crampons to dig into the 5.7 Lava/Mud/Crumbcake finale.

Back at base camp our Ecuadorian Doctor friend had bowls of soup waiting so we kicked back, fattened up for Moncha Grande the next day while enjoying the scenery. This scenery was really spectacular, every bit as good as we were told it would be. Our camp sat above the snout of the large glacier beneath the Monkey Hippey and El Obispo massifs, and right out of this glaciers pointy bit a "Cascada" more than 500 meters long dropped down into a huge blue/green lake. Things took a turn for the worse, as a hard cold rain set in. From my sleeping bag I was encouraged when the noise from the rainfall ceased at about 10pm, when I went out for a leak at midnight I found that it hadn't stopped raining, just metamorphosed into snow. The morning dawned with 20 cm on the ground and more coming down... so much for Moncha Grande. We Burned our excess food and strapped on 60 lb packs for the hike out.

I inserted another jaunt up to Guagua Pichincha in this rest day, and shared the taxi to Lloa with a nice guy named Tyler from South Carolina. I was then poised for a spell of "normal" climbing up Cayambe and Chimborazo, in that order. Cayambe was a lot of fun, Cosme from Safari Ecuador was enlisted due to the fact that all other partners were either working, or had done that peak before. This turned out to be a good move, as a lot of snow had fallen here also, and a very thick fog set in making route finding, even for Cosme, a real challenge. We later bragged that we bagged all three summits on this peak, which we did, but the true story was that it took three tries climbing up, then down 300 meters to the various summits to find the Cumbre Maxima at about 19,000 ft. Even though this was a non technical, "One Axe" peak, I felt good about making all three summits in pea soup fog and deep snow, other groups leaving the hut that day did not summit.

That night it rained big time in Quito, enough to eliminate the possibility for bagging Chimborazo the next morning which had been my plan. Not to worry cuz at this time Yossi showed up with an offer to try a first ever summit of Antisana from the east side. This is one of the few firsts left in Ecuador and so I enthusiastically said yes despite the soggy and complex approach to the east of this most remote peak with its famously wild and active glaciers. On my past summit of Antisana I had been fascinated with the eastern side of the peak which was said to drop off like a rock to the jungle below, and contain the worlds largest equatorial glacier mass.

After a major and soggy approach we arrived at 5000 meters on the east side just as the snow really started falling. The next morning we bashed our way up vertical serac walls and deep snows to a point still several hundred meters below the summit which was blocked by really colossal serac walls. These were not gonna yield to us in these conditions, in which several centimeters of snow was falling per hour. Back to the tent we slogged, our disappointment punctuated with numerous drops into the well disguised crevasses with which this glacier was so amply endowed. When we returned to our tent it was crushed to ankle level by the heavy snow that had fallen.

Yossi and I committed to try this route again next year feeling that firsts such as these don't come easily and this one was worth a second try. I bagged another, and final, summit of Guagua Pichincha in here about now, which gave Yossi just enough time to concoct another scheme to bag Quillindana, known as the Matterhorn of Ecuador and said to consist of 5.7 rock of prodigious dimensions. Since all the glaciated peaks were hammered with major snows and blows, I said something intelligent like "OK" and we were off across the pajamo again thru some really impressive Haciendas to the base of Quillindana.

Quillindana was a most scenic peak, and offered the finest views of the "Avenida Volcan", it seemed like all the major peaks were visible from there, Sangay, El Altar, Cayambe, Chimborazo, Coxapaxi, The Illinizas, Corazon. It was neat looking at all these peaks that I had climbed, and a few that still remained. As we pulled into a camp at 4300 meters, the heavens opened up and it poured rain long and hard. The next morning we dashed enthusiastically for the main summit of Quillindana and realized after some time that 5.7 rock coated in snow and ice for that number of pitches was gonna be out of the question - it was of course raining/hailing again. We settled for the Ventanimilla summit of this peak. This one is really tops on my list for next year, the face looks like the Eigerwand, and from the Cotopaxi side was really intimidating.

So this was the trip in a large nutshell, all in all something like 11 summits in the 3 plus weeks, two misses, one on Antisana, and settling for the minor summit on Quillindana, but overall a good trip. It proved to me, what I had known, that despite Ecuador's reputation for non-technical climbing if you want technical climbing it is there in abundance, just don't follow everybody else around.

I still have much to climb down there and cant wait to return to finish off more peaks. I will defiantly spend New Years 1999 there, no town does these holidays like Quito, a great town in a location that's pure heaven for big mountain enthusiasts.

• *John Zazzara*

Grouse Mountain

Grouse Mtn (8067) is the high point of the Buttermilk, and an obvious candidate for the WIMP (Winter, Inyo, Mono, Peak) list. Today was beautiful with the temperature in town pushing 60. Joe Kelsey, Toby, Lori and I decided that we should bag this noble peak before it got too snowy. We drove up the Buttermilk road 1.5 miles past the cattleguard at the boulders turned left on a spur, drove .25 miles to a circle around a Pinyon and parked. At this point we are about 1.5 miles NW of the peak. Separating us from the peak was the 200 foot deep wash of McGee Creek. We contoured west, upstream for a bit until we found an easy crossing. At this point, we are west of the peak. Easy sand slopes led up to the west shoulder and a series of rock towers. We were concerned about Toby's ability to negotiate these, so we dropped down to the south and found an easy sand route meandering up through some spectacular orange granite towers to the saddle west of the summit area. Scrambling through large blocks brought all of us to the summit expeditiously. We had concerns about Toby's ability to handle this, but Joe reminded us that Toby had climbed Fremont Peak. Beautiful on the summit, no wind, Joe ate lunch in a T shirt. We descended the north slope directly from the saddle, covered with four inches of snow. Considering that this slope receives no sun this time of year, it was surprising how little snow there was. A short walk nw, a drop into and out of the McGee Creek wash and we were back at the car. Round trip stats: 3 miles, 1000 feet, 2.5 hours. Could be done faster by taking our descent route up.

• *Eric and Lori Beck*

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Rock Climbing Classifications

The following trip classifications are to assist you in choosing trips for which you are qualified. No simple rating system can anticipate all possible conditions.

Class 1: Walking on a trail.

Class 2: Walking cross-country, using hands for balance.

Class 3: Requires use of hands for climbing, rope may be used.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 2/21/99. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



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"Vy can't ve chust climb?" - John Salathe

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