



August, 2000 Peak Climbing Section, Loma Prieta Chapter, Sierra Club Vol. 34 No. 8

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

Next General Meeting

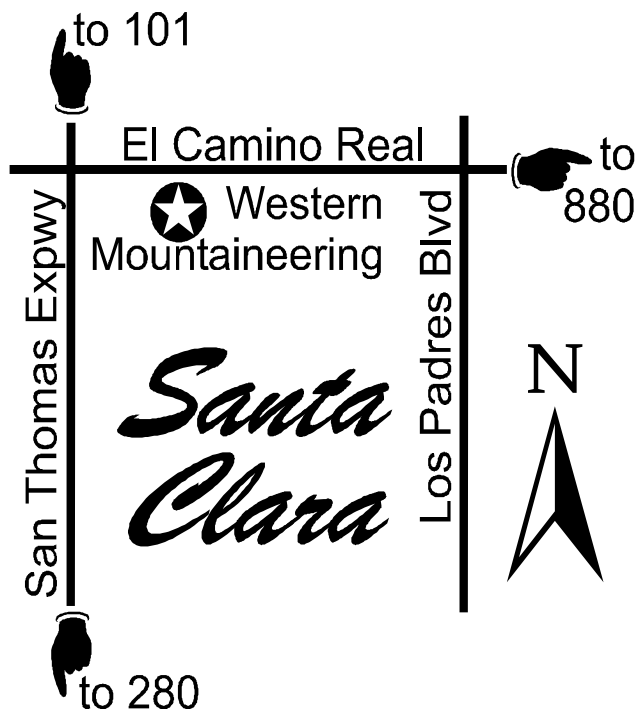
Date: Tuesday, August 8

Time: 8:00 PM

Program: Climbing in the Caucasus and Crimea by Maxym Runov. This will give us all an insight into climbing in Russia and the Ukraine!

Directions: 2344 El Camino Real, Santa Clara (between San Thomas and Los Padres).

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 8/27/2000 Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Mountaineering Committee Seeks Reviewers

The PCS Mountaineering Committee is in the process of reviewing and revising the leadership guidelines and first-aid requirements, and is looking for PCS members who would want to take part in this activity or review the revised policies prior to publication. If you're interested, contact Kelly Maas (408) 378-5311 or maas@idt.com

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.

Mt. Goddard

Peak: Mt. Goddard (13,568 ft.), East Ridge
Rating: Class 3
Dates: Sat-Mon; September 2-4
Contacts: Cecil Anison (cecilann@earthlink.net)
 Kai Wiedman (650)347-5234

Mt. Goddard is one of the dominant peaks of the High Sierra. This solitary giant's position west of the crest makes it visible from many points in the range. We will climb the more interesting East Ridge, first climbed by Walter Starr, Jr., who wrote the definitive guide to the John Muir trail. You may recall that he died while attempting a solo climb of Michael Minaret and his body was later recovered by none other than Norman Clyde. This climb entails a very demanding 40 mile round trip.

Kearsarge, University, & Independence

Peaks: Kearsarge (12,618'), Independence (11,742'), University (13,589'), Class: 1-3
Dates: September 15-17, Fri-Sun
Map: Kearsarge Peak, Mt Williamson 7.5' topos
Contact: Bob Suzuki, rsuzuki@dsptlg.com, bobszk@bigfoot.com, (W) 510-657-7555 x223, (H) 408-259-0772

Try these 3 late summer day hikes from the Onion Valley campground at 9200', and enjoy the company of your fellow PCSers in the quieter eastern Sierra. Co-organizer wanted.

Tenth Annual Yosemite Family Camp

Peaks: To be determined (Looking for hike/climb leaders)
Dates: September 23-24
Contact: Cecil Anison (cecilann@earthlink.net)
(408)395-4525

The trip will be in Yosemite Valley this year and family members are welcome, as usual. Plan on lots of fun as we hike, climb, explore, and commune in this spectacular setting. Space is limited to three reserved campsites so be sure to sign up early.

Mt. Lola

A great hike on Father's Day weekend

June 17, 2000

The five of us, Aaron Schuman (fearless leader), Pat Ibbetson (fearless co-leader), Cynthia Schuman, Chris Macintosh, my 11-year old daughter Candice and your faithful scribe met at Andy's, a Pullman Car restaurant in Truckee. A few of us had a heavy breakfast and some only coffee. We then drove a half-hour or so north on Highway 89.

After taking a paved side road west? For a few miles, our leaders consulted a road map and Patrick's guidebook and we turned onto an unpaved road. Patrick managed to find a reasonable way to get within a mile and a half of the peak. He and I ferried the other climbers, who left their low-clearance vehicles behind. We parked next to a stream flowing through a lovely meadow and began the hike at about 10:30 a.m. I managed to bump the bottom of my van on a rock, cracking my transmission fluid pan, which I had to replace upon my return to the Bay Area.

Later in the summer when the snow melts, a fine trail will appear leading all the way to the top of Lola (9,100 feet). But on our hike the trail soon disappeared under snow and our leaders guided us through the forest up to the south ridge of the peak. We stopped for a snack at an obvious clearing a few hundred meters below the summit. It offered shade, dry ground, fallen logs for sitting, and great views of the still-snowy peaks surrounding us and two reservoirs to the south.

Aaron helped Candice up some steep snow and around noon she made it to the top-- her first SPS summit. Chris was feeling energetic and wanted to do "North Lola" but decided against it. After about 25 minutes we started our leisurely hike back and returned to the vehicles about 4 hours after we started walking. Mid-June turned out to be a great time to do this easy peak. We enjoyed great weather and it was fun to hike on firm snow. After our return to the vehicles, the members of the group went their separate ways to celebrate the rest of Father's Day weekend.

My thanks to Aaron and the rest of the group for making Candice's first Sierra peak such an enjoyable and memorable experience. Thanks to Pat for taking on this trip as a PCS leadership checkout.

• *Tony Cruz*

Independence Peak

July 1, 2000

On Saturday July 1st Arun Mahajan, Stephan Meier, and I set out for Independence Peak from the Onion Valley parking lot.

After about 30 minutes of hiking on the trail to Robinson Lake we hit a flatter section of trail and could see a relatively open

section where we had a clear shot at the south ridge of Independence.

The going was slow lower on the mountain as the scree was disagreeably loose and required extra energy to pedal up the pea sized gravel. We headed for a prominent horizontal teetering block on the ridge to the far right (south) of the summit following a gully. Once on the ridge we proceeded towards the summit reaching a flat area at the top of another, more inviting chute. We continued on the very top of the ridge only dropping to the right hand side only just prior to the final summit. Heading down we opted for the inviting looking chute and this made for a speedy slide back to the cars. Stephan with his ski poles polished his scree skiing skills as Arun joyfully shot down hill at full gallop.

Round trip was about 6 hours making this a very reasonable length dayhike. (Note: Although warnings about bears abounded there were no bear boxes available for food storage other than those reserved for car campers.)

• *Scott Kreide*

Independence Peak and Olancha Peak

July 2, 2000

On Sunday July 2 I climbed Independence Peak (11,742' per SPS list or 11,744' per Secor) alone from Onion Valley via the south ridge (3rd class) as per Secor. The route went exactly as described. A leisurely start at 9am put me at Robinson Lake shortly after 10, and after a break I started up a talus slope to a chute which led me to the ridge after 70min. at about 11.30. Another hour along the ridge took me to the summit. The register showed that Arun Mahajan and two others had summited the prior day. Took 30 min. for lunch then headed back along the ridge to a bit past where the route takes one back onto the west side. We then turned directly down on a developing use trail, eventually plunge stepping down scree slopes to reach the trail well below Robinson Lake at 2pm and my car at 2.30pm. This was my first third class peak. Since every trip offering I can recall which involved a 3rd-class peak said "prior 3rd class experience required", by soloing this peak I have hopefully gotten a toe in the door.

The early finish allowed time for the long drive down 395, up to Kennedy Meadows and well beyond to the Monache Meadows trailhead. The driving directions posted on Climber.Org for this trailhead are very good. The Monache Jeep Road was quite an adventure, with the last 9 miles taking about 70 minutes. Very pretty area. The hike to Olancha Peak is about 15 miles round-trip with a gain of about 4,200'. I started off on a cool Monday morning at 7am. The route follows a stock trail east for a short while then reaches the PCT going north, eventually reaching a point where one heads up forested then scree slopes to the peak, which is topped with a radio relay station that is actually visible from the PCT. I summited at 11.45am, staying 45 min. and enjoying views of Langley, Whitney, the Kaweahs, Great West divide. The register is in a bolted box which box though apparently placed in 1959 looks about one year old. The one register book was placed in 1994 although the first entry is not until 1997; it is exactly half full. A number of entries this year, including one yesterday. Heading down at 12.30, I reached the trail after about 50 min. then sped back arriving at the trail head just after 3 pm. Then it was a very long and winding drive back, several hours down to Kernville and eventually Bakersfield

where the day ended, with a heightened appreciation for the vastness of the southern Sierra.

• *Mike McDermitt*

Recess Peak

July 1-3, 2000

Remember that euphoric feeling during 5th grade when it was time for recess? Recapture that feeling. Recess Peak has 1000' of pleasurable class 3 climbing on the southwest arete. As Secor says, "the problem is approaching the arete."

Richard and I left from the Bear Creek Diversion Dam and followed one of the most beautiful trails in the Sierra. At times one can look into the clear water of forest-lined Bear Creek and see trout swimming 12 feet under the clear, cold water. Whiffs of Douglas fir alternating with the vanilla of Jeffrey Pine scent the air.

It was peak wildflower time. We observed a huge variety of flowers including chocolate-dipped mariposa lilies, leopard lilies, Sierra crane orchid, California geranium, five-fingered cinquefoil, pussy paws, as well as the usual shooting stars, larkspur, lupine, columbine, and mule ears.

We left the Bear Creek Trail at its 9000' high point and climbed due north to intersect the John Muir Trail which we followed a short way west. We left the John Muir Trail at 9800' to travel north again. There we picked up a little used unmarked trail which went generally east to the snow survey cabin, then we continued to the 10,600' ridge near the outlet of the smallest lake due east of Recess Peak.

Others must have camped there before because we found a last year's peppermint tea bag. Was it yours? The ridge commanded an inspiring view of Recess and better yet, had a pleasant breeze which discouraged the mosquitoes. From our camp we could see firsthand the source of the discontinuity in the contour lines on the topo map.

After setting up camp, we left to climb Volcanic Knob, an interesting plug about a mile away with a little class 3 summit. A petite Yosemite toad (*Bufo canorus*) greeted us as we descended, and its buddies serenaded us to sleep that evening.

The next morning our route took us over bump 11,705. The most exposed section is from this hill to the southwest arete of Recess, but can be bypassed downhill if the exposure is bothersome. Then, climb the crest of the wave to the summit.

The views are terrific: Seven Gables as Hawthorne never imagined, Mt. Mills looking like a roller coaster ride, and even Ritter and Banner in the distant north. Lake Thomas Edison to the west. As I opened our plastic container of peanut butter for lunch, Richard thoughtfully reminded me that I had a Recess peanut butter cup.

The next day we returned directly to the Bear Creek Trail by following the outlet creek downhill to first the John Muir Trail and then the Bear Creek Trail.

There are few PCS names in the Recess register. Get going. You are missing something special.

• *Debbie Bulger*

North Palisade

July 2, 2000

On July 1, 2000 Dee and I started up the North Fork of Big Pine Creek for an ascent of the North Palisade via the U-Notch. We chugged up past Sam Mack Meadow to the tarn at an elevation of 12165 feet at the base of the Palisade Glacier. This is approximately 4200 feet of elevation gain. We camped on the snow near the tarn. This tarn is open now and offers a great source for water. Camping near this tarn is marginal. This area is essentially the terminal moraine for the Palisade Glacier. One party of two was bivied on top of a flat rock and another party of one was bivied on top of another flat rock. These are the only two clearly flat spots in the area outside of the snow so later season camping is suspect. The big rock would probably support three bivi bags.

The next day Dee and I headed up to the 'schrund at about 5:30 AM. The snow bridge at the right hand edge of the 'schrund is gone. We decided to climb the rock face next to the 'schrund. This goes by climbing the vestiges of the foot of the snow bridge up to a small icy platform. From here the rock can be climbed. One move up and two choices are presented: either stay on the fractured and detached flake and climb up about fifteen or twenty feet or go up a few moves and traverse left. I chose to traverse left since that goes directly to a rappel anchor next to a nice platform. Once on the platform with the rappel slings the problem is over. How hard? Secor says 4th to 5th class. Probably. I lead it in crampons, for what that is worth. Once the vestige of the snow bridge melts back this will get harder. My memory fails me in recalling what the rock looks like below the fractured flake.

Once past the 'schrund we headed up the couloir. The couloir is steep, icy and dangerous. There are steps kicked in the snow and plenty of ice axe handle holes so it is readily negotiated. All the way up the couloir I kept thinking of the Norman Clyde story where he fell in some couloir and sailed over the berschrund hollering: "Here I go to Hell!". Norman survived, I doubted I would fall, and I doubt if Norman ended up in Hell. The view in the couloir is stunning. The couloir is convex so the sight of the 'schrund disappears shortly. The sun rarely touches the interior of the couloir so the view is of two dark walls, a shadowed snow field steeply dropping to an edge, and the brightly lit Palisade Glacier some 500 plus feet below.

At the top of the couloir is the U-Notch itself. Directly at the top of the U-Notch is the Chimney Variation. This is two 100 foot pitches (or so) of 5.4 rock. The hardest move is right at the end. Fun in mountain boots! From the top of the Chimney a steep slab is traversed on the right. This goes to a notch. From the notch head down and then back up towards the summit (it is right there). This is unrelenting third class. At the very end is a fourth class move above a scary slot that gets to the summit block.

Going down reverses the ascent. Be very, very, wary of the rappel anchors in the chimney. They are mostly good but there is one or two losers in there. When in doubt, back 'em up.

Round trip time from near the 12165 tarn was about 12 hours. We were at the top of the couloir within 3.5 hours but seemed to bog down somewhat after that.

On Monday morning we awoke to sharply colder temperatures and increased wind. We decided to pass on the Swiss Arete. Bad decision. The front moved through and the temperatures returned to balmy by 11:00 AM or so. Instead, we participated in a rescue

effort of a climber who had what was probably acute altitude sickness. He was yanked out with a helicopter.

This is, without a doubt, my favorite route on my favorite mountain. The chug in includes hiking past the Lon Chaney cabin and Sam Mack Meadow. Camping is at the foot of the Palisade Glacier, apron to the Gods: Temple Crag, Gayley, Sill, Polemonium, North Palisade, Starlight, T-Bolt, Winchell, and their cousin Agassiz. The ascent includes ascending the glacier to the bergschrund, crossing the bergschrund, ascending the spectacular couloir, viewing the panorama of Dusy Basin from the top of the couloir, ascending two pitches of fifth class rock in mountaineering boots, unrelenting third class rock, and finally the fourth class curve ball at the end: the pull up onto the summit block above the scary slot.

For mountaineers whose interests go beyond tapping the summit of one peak in order to move on to the next, this route, on this mountain, is absolutely a must do.

• *Rick and Dee Booth*

The Weather God Smiled at Us

Mount Rainier, Kautz Glacier Route:

July 7th 2000

The main climbing route on Mount Rainier via Camp Muir and the Disappointment Cleaver can be described as a "zoo". Not only this is the most common route for climbers, tourist like to take the hike up to Camp Muir and back as a day hike. The trail can be packed with hikers shoulder to shoulder. On the other hand, the Kautz Glacier route is less popular with climbers, and it requires that one crosses the Nisqually Glacier with its many open crevasses, leaving the tourists behind.

After crossing the Nisqually, our route ascended steeply to the ridge above the Wilson Glacier, and we set up our first camp on a large flat snow shelf at elevation of 7,800 ft. It rained on us a bit that evening. Starting early the following day we continued up the ridge along the edge of the Wilson Glacier and up through the "Turtle Snowfield" to Camp Hazard. They say that camp Hazard is named after a person, but I think there is more to it. Camp Hazard is located on a high ridge at 11,600 ft. The rock ridge continues for additional several hundreds of feet to a point where it is covered by the open edge of the Kautz Glacier. Looking from below, it is amazing that the entire glacier doesn't simply come crashing down and cover the entire area, but it doesn't, it flows to the left and to the right leaving the ridge bare.

We didn't plan to go all the way up to camp Hazard. It was a mistake, which cost Ted his summit bid, but of course we didn't know that at the time. Melting snow into drinking water is a laborious job. We had spent a couple of hours every night doing just that. Near camp Hazard there were 2 sources of running water, apparently, glacier melt. Ted traverse the snow field to our right to try to catch some of this water, and while collecting water some rocks came tumbling down hitting his foot. Even though he was wearing plastic boots, the injury was too great for him to feel comfortable to push for the summit the following day. After watching the rock fall activity for 2 days, I think the topography of the area creates 2 natural drainage paths, running either side of the ridge, which supports the camp. These drainage paths carry everything the glacier releases down the mountain, water melt, chunks of ice, and rock debris. You want to collect the water; you are likely to collect some rocks too. The camp itself is protected by the unusual topography, but I understand that it does get hit

every so often, hence, the ranger recommends against staying there.

Friday dawned clear and bright, but we didn't wait for dawn. We were up at 2 AM and started climbing around 3:30. The route descends a couple of hundred feet to skirt a long ridge of seracs then climbs a steep chute on the other side. This is the crux of the route. Estimates on how steep the chute is vary from 35% all the way to 55%. My inclinometer showed 35% for the entire chute and 42-44% for the steepest section, but it was icy. We setup a series of fixed ropes in hopes of easing the climb for some of the less experienced in our group, but they used only one of them on the way up. Since I thought that self arrest in the steep section of the icy chute was almost impossible, I set up a series of running protections which were removed by Joe, who was the last person in my group, except for those protections which were also used for the fixed ropes. I wander; the other rope team climbed one of the steep sections without any protections. The chute in my mind is simply the back of the Kautz glacier. At first look, it is no different than many snow chutes in other places, but it is way too icy and broken up to be simply last season's snow. There are many small cracks throughout, but nothing more than an inch thick.

Above the chute our route kept angling to the right till we finally hit the Columbia Crest (the rim of Rainier's crater) at the same point the standard RMI route does coming from the Disappointment Cleaver route.

We got to the summit around 10:00 AM. It was bright and clear with visibility of several hundred miles in every direction. The temperatures must have been in the 40s despite the light wind. We took pictures, ate summit chocolate and headed down. Back in the chute, now soften by the warm sun, everybody used the fixed ropes to rappel, and I down climbed while Maxym gave me a belay from below. Down-climbing was not terribly hard, except for the few spots where hard glacier ice appeared unexpectedly through the snow. One group, which came behind us, used a boot-axe belay to descend the steep sections.

Back at camp by 3:30 PM, we decided to spend a 3rd night on the mountain and descended back to Paradise the next morning.

Generally, this is not a very hard mountain to climb, but the weather is the major factor. We were lucky this time. The following day, the weather turned ugly again with high wind and thick clouds.

Participants: Huy Nguyen, Joe Budman, Maxym Runov, Nathan Trinknein, and Ted Raczek. Leaders: George Van Gordon, and Ron Karpel.

• *Ron Karpel*

Four Gables

"Where is that summit register?"

July 8-9, 2000

PCS trip 12,720' Class 2 South Slope

As we marched across the plateau of Four Gables, boots crunching down on jagged, hard snow, all eyes were focused on the furthest end point, the summit. As each of us reached the jumble of upended boulders, each climber looked toward an apparent man-made pyramid pile of rocks on the precipiced edge. Each took it apart and said, "What? Where's the register?" Well, there ya' go. We double checked altimeters, rearranged topo maps, recounted our route, and declared this our summit. We

secretly think Arun kicked it over the cliff ["To hell with the SPS list I say"]! Participants: Debbie Benham (leader), Tom Curl, Tom Johnson, Arun Mahajan, Diane Medrano, Dot Reilly (annointed coleader), Noriko Sekikawa, and Steve Shun.

THOSE FAVORITE MOMENTS:

For Debbie - when I alerted everyone at the North Lake trailhead how important it was to bring rain gear, including flies for the tents, as there was rain in the forecast. We had beautiful weather.

For Tom - bringing all rain gear. Seeing the gorgeous views of the canyon and the panorama of Bear Creek Spire, Merriam, Royce and Feather peaks.

For Dot - hearing about REIoutlet.com.

For Diane - clamoring over boulders on Four Gables and seeing Sky Pilot on the way to the summit.

For Arun - squishing all the mosquitoes. Kicking steps in the steeply angled snow slope and stepping on the razor sharp snow cups on the summit plateau.

For Steve - returning to the beauty of the high Sierra.

A MEMORABLE QUOTE:

A couple, just hiking up to Piute Pass as we were on our way out, commented that they were going in for nine days. When Arun discovered they were backpacking, not peak bagging, he uttered, in complete astonishment, "Can you believe that? They're going in for nine days and they're not going to climb one peak. What a waste of time!"

Voila! a great trip,

• *Debbie Benham*

Peak with Two Names

Gandalf Peak - The Thinking Person's Mountain

July 14-16, 2000

This peak is otherwise known as Palisade Crest (13520), and on July 14-16 four adventurous hobbits ventured into Highsierraland to tackle this class 4 pinnacle. Participants were Peter Maxwell (organizer), John Kerr, Arun Mahajan and Larry Sokolsky. For Peter and John it was their second attempt, after a bungled trip one year ago in which they took the wrong route to get to Scimitar Pass. The "bozo experience factor" (BEF) gained from this trip was put to good use and the same mistake was not made again. BEF helped us in other ways too, as will become clear.

We started hiking at some leisurely time after 9 am and plodded our way up the south fork of Big Pine Creek. With "only" 5-6 miles and 3300' elevation gain the hike in looked a breeze, but the large amount of boulder hopping required beyond Willow Lake made it seem a lot longer and more strenuous. BEF helped us avoid the bog which one encounters by following the trail on the south side of the creek for too long. This bog is at the exit of the gully just before the one through which descends the exit creek from Elinore Lake.

The worst part of the hike was shortly after turning southwest to head up to Elinore Lake, when we encountered swarms of mosquitoes the likes of which none of us had ever seen before. They were in our eyes, mouths, ears and all over our clothes. Even high speed panic application of bug repellent couldn't stop the unwelcome experience of being an involuntary donor to the Mosquito Red Cross. Luckily this infested area was small and

very shortly after they became merely "numerous", a state which lasted to the lake. We were fortunate to have a breeze each afternoon which kept them down considerably, more so than the night - getting out to relieve oneself was an invitation to the many mosquitoes who didn't seem to know that they were supposed to be sleeping.

I demonstrated that meals do not always have to be dehydrated by bringing out real food: tortillas, refried beans, cheese, lettuce and salsa. John was very skeptical, making references to the high altitude bean problem. He was right, and severe indigestion lasting half the night took away some of the advantages of going to bed at 8 pm.

Summit day saw us out of camp at 6:35 am, just 5 minutes later than schedule. After about an hour Larry turned back - he, too, was having stomach problems which unfortunately were not going away. Shortly after the rest of us traversed around the nose of the ridge leading up to Scimitar Pass we encountered a horrible area of steep, loose scree and rocks. It was almost impossible to avoid sending down showers of stones and rocks and we were glad we had such a small group.

Once on the top of this ridge it was evident just how much more snow was there compared to last year. It was severely sun cupped and subject to postholing so we avoided it and climbed on the rocks, avoiding also the larger permanent snowfield at the base of the ridge. The little spires of snow made a very pretty sight though, appropriate for several Kodak moments.

Once at Scimitar Pass we ditched the ice axes we'd been carrying and had a well-earned rest break. John's sobering comments went something like, "We don't want to rush this. If you fall you die". He was referring to the exposed class 3 climbing lasting all the way to the peak. The "thinking person's mountain" definitely earns the title here, with careful attention being required for route finding. Secor's description is accurate, but just gives generalities.

Initially we had to negotiate the Sierra crest to the notch separating this from the summit. The rock was exceptionally good, offering some of the best class 3 climbing I've ever done, and the take-your-breath-away vertical drop down to the glacier far below is what mountaineering is all about. Downclimbing the notch was also far from trivial, once again requiring careful attention to the route.

The class 4 section was just after the notch, being a 160' sloping slab. This turned out to be the easiest part of the climb since the slab has cracks in just the right places for climbing, and the slope is not too great. John had provided the ropes and gear, and also led this section. He had no trouble putting in protection using Friends. Other reports have hinted at difficulties on this slab - without Friends it would have been a different story. The 50m rope was barely long enough, and Arun, who was belaying, had to change position and stand up on a rock to give John the extra 2' he needed.

From the top of the slab it was a simple class 3 scramble to the summit, where we arrived at 12:45 pm. Thinking we might rappel down we carried the ropes up, then discovered there were no slings up there, so carried them back down again, being unwilling to sacrifice a sling. We didn't spend much time on the summit, it being a little cool and breezy. Instead, we took the summit photos, entered our names for posterity in the register, and climbed back down to the top of the slab to eat lunch, where it was more protected.

Going down we took the large snowfield, despite the sun cups, since it was easier than the talus, which wasn't all that solid. Ice

axes were handy here for balance, although Arun proved it could be done without, thereby demonstrating that he'd carried it all the way for nothing. The main drama on the way back down was the steep loose section we had trouble with on the way up. The base alternated between loose rock, small scree and hard-baked mud, so we never knew if our boots were going to stick, slide an inch or a couple of feet or more.

We were back at camp just after 6pm, making for an 11.5 hour day. Despite a later start with dinner than the previous day, we still managed to get to bed by 8 pm. The temperature was such that Larry commented "Another tropical night". It was so warm we hardly needed a sleeping bag, quite remarkable at almost 11,000'.

The last morning was much more laid back - up at 7 am and away by 8:30. There was no sign of the mosquito infestation on our route down, adding evidence that they were very local. We messed around a long time fighting the bushes lining the main creek, trying to find a way across. One should be careful not to go too far downstream here.

Arriving at the cars shortly after 1 pm, it was into Bishop for lunch. John's desire for good beer was voted down in favor of faster service at Sizzler, where the lemonade made substantial inroads into various degrees of dehydration. John still got his beer though, as he produced an amber ale from his car shortly after we returned. "A perfect temperature for beer with taste", he said, as only someone coming from the UK would say.

• *Peter Maxwell*

Touching the JetStream'

A Sierra Club sponsored PCS trip

July 22-23, 2000

At 13,057 ft, Mt Dana towers above Tioga Pass, with its hulking mass visible from Tuolumne Meadows to Lee Vining Canyon. Many have hiked Dana due to accessibility of a high altitude gain, acclimatization and conditioning, and, spectacular views from the summit. With that in mind, and, in the tradition of John Muir, our wandering group of ne'er-do-wells sauntered toward the top, encouraged by the glorious sunshine and slightly cooling breeze. Participants:

Debbie Benham (leader), Bob Bynum and Gretchen Luepke Bynum, Christopher Franchuk, Patty Haight, Prakash Jayaraman, Chris MacIntosh (coleader), Brad Mayer, and Jim Schollard.

Having taken the use trail from Tioga Pass, we rambled through carpets of larkspur, lupine, Indian paintbrush, and Yosemite aster. Climbing, steeply, Gretchen noted the beautiful structures of metamorphic rock interspersed with the granite seen lower down on the mountain. Jim remarked on the beauty of the day, not a cloud in the sky, with a full day ahead to explore more peaks. [And so he did! Jim went on to summit Gibbs.] From Dana's top, we marveled at the blue of Mono Lake, clarity of the far off ranges, and, tallied the peaks we had climbed (oh so many now). For Prakash, a first summit in the Sierra and a first time with the Peak Climbing Section! Congratulations. Heading down, many of us skirted a snowfield, but, Patty and Brad, brave souls, ran down, beating us to the Dana saddle!

Often, campground stays get short shrift. To let you know, our two campsites were lovely and on the periphery of Tuolumne Meadows Campground. However, we have some interesting moments, like: (a) when Chris MacIntosh arrived at 1:30 in the morning, along with Prakash and Christopher, and turned around

to see a bear's butt sticking out of the rear of her Isuzu Trooper! (b) Saturday evening happy hour; (c) attending the Ranger Program Saturday night with Chris MacIntosh accurately answering the ptmarigan question and Debbie Benham knowing all three posted speed limits of Tuolumne Meadows; (d) admiring the ranger's oral tradition of story-telling and genuine love of the high Sierra; and, last but not least, (e) Bob's bringing of the marshmallows and subsequent roasting.

Sunday found us having brunch at the picnic tables followed by a short hike of Gaylor Peak at 11,004'. None really wanted to go home and we meandered to our cars ever-so-slowly. The camaraderie was remarked on and felt all 'round, and for this, I thank you all!

• *Debbie Benham*

Crystal Range Ramble

July 23, 2000

There were four of on this demanding hike (Death March). Using a car shuttle, we succeeded in traversing the highest section of the Crystal Range and managed to reach the summit of four peaks. Participants were: Richard Vasser, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Dan Tischler, and George Sinclair.

After leaving a car at the Horsetail Falls trailhead, we drove up to Wrights Lake and hiked in from there. Three miles of trail brought us to beautiful Smith Lake. Beyond here it was almost all off-trail until about the last one mile of the hike. I think most of us saw more talus than any of us hope to see again in awhile.

Our first peak - Mt. Price, involved a little class 3 crossing the ridge from peak 9,650 (0.5 mile west of Price) to Price. It was a beautifully clear and sunny day and we admired the view in all directions from the top of Price. Desolate Lake Aloha was directly below us. From Price it was a short hike to Mt. Agassiz and its spectacular summit (class 3) rock that dramatically overhangs the eastern side of the peak.

From Agassiz to Pyramid was a long haul over miles of broken talus. On the way we climbed peak 9,686. After a short section of class 3 going along the ridge below our last peak, we finally reached the summit of Pyramid late in the afternoon. We signed the register, took a few photos, and began the long descent down to Twin Bridges.

This was the most difficult part of the day, as the 4,000 foot descent seemed to take forever, and the rugged terrain working around Toem and Ropi lakes and down Pyramid Creek did not help. We finally reached the cars at about 7:30. Everyone was quite tired, yet satisfied in having climbed four peaks in one day.

• *George Sinclair*

The best backpacks are named for national parks or mountain ranges. Steer clear of those named for landfills.

Private 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.

Colosseum

Peak: Colosseum (12,473, class 1)
Date: August 19 - 20, 2000
Contact: Charles Schafer, (408) 354-1545
Contact: Bob Evans, robtwevans@email.msn.com
Days: (408) 998-2857

Saturday: Sawmill Pass trailhead (4,586) over Sawmill Pass (11,347) to Woods Lake (10,600), about 10 miles.

Sunday: Bag Colosseum (12,473) via class 1 S.W. slopes and out. Cedric Wright an option depending on participants and circumstances. \$5/person permit fee reimbursement.

Pine Creek Derby

Peaks: Merriam Peak, class 2, 13280
+ Royce Peak, class 2, 13103
Dates: Aug 26-27, 2000 (Sat-Sun)
Maps: Mt Abbot 15' or Mt Hilgard 7.5'
Leader: Aaron Schuman
Contact: aaron_schuman@yahoo.com
Details: <http://sj.znet.com/~cynthiam/royce.html>

Join me for a weekend backpack in the rugged, scenic backcountry behind the Rowana tungsten mine.

Saturday, we'll start at Pine Creek, at 7400 feet, and hike 8 miles on trail to our high lake at 11700 feet, for 4300 gain.

Sunday, we gain 1100 to the saddle, 900 up Royce, back to the saddle, and 700 up Merriam. Then we break camp, hike out, and drive home. Big mountains! We're going to be working pretty hard.

Previous groups traveling on this route in August have needed ice axes in the steep snow in the couloir leading up to the saddle. Participants must be equipped and skilled in self arrest.

I have a permit for six people.

Labor Day Combo

Peaks: Red Top (9973), Sing Pk (10520+), Gale Pk (10680+), Madera Pk (10509)
Dates: Sep 2-4 (Labor Day, Sat-Mon)
Maps: Sing Peak 7.5" quad
Leader: Steve Eckert, eckert@climber.org

I just got a permit for the Chiquito Pass trailhead, which I'll be exploring for the first time. Fast and slow alike are welcome, but Rebecca and I will take a moderate steady pace whether or not anyone stays with us. Beginners are welcome -IF- you are able to navigate on your own and smart enough to know your limits -OR-if you find a partner to help. This private trip requires a 6 mile 2000' backpack to Spotted Lakes, with a bit of cross country but mostly trail. The scenery should be great, as we cross into the southern tip of Yosemite without PAYING for the privilege.

The "combo" part of the trip is this: The slower folks can hang out in camp or on a ridge while the faster folks knock off a few extra peaks. Madera might just be a pipe dream, but we should be able to get Red Top the day we hike in, Gale+Sing or layover the next day, and MAYBE, with an early enough start, a fourth one before lunch and the hike out. Rebecca is taking a book and aiming for a single peak, so you'll have company if you aren't gung-ho.

Bear cannisters are absolutely required, no climbing gear needed.

Most of the permit slots are already filled, but as of last week no one else had requested a permit for this trailhead... so you are

welcome to get your own permit and join us! For details, see <http://www.climber.org/eckert/RangerContacts.html> and search for Chiquito Pass (Minarets Wilderness info just updated!)

Sawtooth, Needham, Vandaveer, Florence

Peaks: Sawtooth (12,343'), Needham (12,520+), Vandaveer (11,947'), Florence (12,432')
Class: 1-3
Dates: September 2-4 (Sat-Mon)
Map: Mineral King 7.5' topo
Contact: Bob Suzuki
rsuzuki@dsptlg.com, bobszk@bigfoot.com
(W) 510-657-7555 x223, (H) 408-259-0772

Saturday, from Mineral King in Sequoia NP, we'll do a long day hike to climb Sawtooth and Needham. Sunday we'll leave for an overnight backpack to climb Vandaveer and Florence. Permit for 7; this trip is almost full. Co-organizer wanted.

Merriam and Royce

Peaks: Merriam (13103') & Royce (13280'), Class 3
Date: September 16-18
Contact: Peter Maxwell (408) 737 9770

This trip is a more leisurely version of what is often done over a regular weekend. With a whole day at our disposal, we should be able to bag both peaks without being too rushed. There's still an 8 mile hike in with 4300' elevation gain to get to camp so participants need to be in good shape and can walk at a reasonable pace. The intended route comprises the east faces of both peaks, which are rated class 3. However, it is possible that we'll take the snow slope leading to the saddle between the peaks. Participants need to be experienced in class 3 climbing since the plan involves downclimbing one of the faces. They also need to be proficient with an ice axe and know how to use one for self arrest.

Khumbu region of Nepal

Peak: Island Pek or Mera Peak
Date: Oct-Nov 2000
Contact: Tim Hult 408-970-0760, Timdhult@aol.com

Four week trip into a spectacular and storied region of the Himalaya. These are "minimal" trekking peaks open to qualified class 3 peak baggers with snow experience. Views of Everest and all those places you've heard about. Experience and compatibility with groups on long "wilderness" trips a must.

Argentina - January 2001

Peaks: A Seven Summit Mountain
Aconcaqua 6959 m
Contact: Warren Storkman, 650-493-895

Denali

Peak: Denali, 20,320 ft.
Date: May-June 2001
Contact: Tim Hult 408-970-0760, Timdhult@aol.com

Been there twice but unfortunately haven't done it yet as weather and sickness (the flu) have kept me off the summit. Third time a charm? Looking for qualified partners for this major, no nonsense peak. Must have extensive experience in the following: high altitude climbing (18,000 ft +), excellent winter camping skills and equipment, proven ability to get along with partners on a multi-week trip. Ice climbing and crevasse rescue will be taught if required. Prefer those with the ability to ski or willingness to learn how to ski with a pack on - need NOT be an expert! Serious inquires only.

Elected Officials

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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 8/27/2000. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



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

First Class Mail - Dated Material