

World Wide Web Address: <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/>

General Meeting

Date: Tuesday, Nov 8
Time: 7:30 PM
Where: Peninsula Conservation Center

3921 E. Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA
(see below for directions)

Program: Broad Peak by Hal Tompkins

Hal Tompkins will present his slides from his successful expedition in July 1997 to Broad Peak, an 8000m peak in the Karakoram Range, Pakistan. Hal may well be the first PCS member to accomplish climbing an 8000m mountain.

We'll be in the Library rather than the usual "Raptor Room."

Directions: From 101: Exit at San Antonio Road, go east to the first traffic light, turn left and follow Bayshore Rd to the PCC on the corner of Corporation Way. A sign marking the PCC is out front. Park behind.



Annual Election of PCS Officers

The nominating committee [Debbie Benham, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Bob Suzuki] is pleased to announce that candidates have been selected for 2005-2006. Election of PCS officers occurs at the November meeting with additional nominations, if any, accepted from the floor.

Elected officials take office right away. The slate of nominated officers:

Chair: Tom Driscoll
Vice-Chair: William Kirkpatrick
Treasurer: Landa Robillard



Proposal Passes Unanimously

The hardcopy Scree is be discontinued.

All those in attendance at the October 2005 PCS meeting voted, unanimously, to stop production of a hardcopy 'Scree'. Stoppage will be effective immediately. As soon as the terms runs out for those members who have signed up for hardcopy, which I believe are about 4 members, a printed version will no longer be mailed out to members. 'Scree' is currently available on the world wide web for all to read....

■ D.Benham, editor



It's A Girl!

Megan Ann Leiker was born at 1:30pm, October 21, 2005. She weighs 6lbs, 14oz, and is 20" long. Mom, Dad, and Megan are doing fine. Congratulations Rich and Maggie!

PCS Trips

PCS trips must be submitted through the Scheduler (see back cover for details).

Mt Diablo

Date: Sunday, December 4, 2005

Peak: Mt Diablo (3,849'), class 1

Leader(s): Aaron Schuman

climberaaron@comcast.net

Nancy Fitzsimmons, 650/938-2106

pkclimber@aol.com

Join us for a fun hike around and up Mount Diablo. This conditioning hike is a moderately paced trip suitable for beginner and veteran peak climbers. The hike will consist of 16 miles and 4500 ft of elevation gain with some steep trails. We will start at Mitchell Canyon, go to Eagle Peak, and continue to the summit. Leave the ice axe and crampons at home. Carpool 8am at Mission Blvd and I-680 Park & Ride (across from McDonald's) or meet 9am at the Mitchell Canyon trailhead.

Mt Sizer

Date: Saturday, January 7, 2006

Peak: Mt Sizer, Henry Coe Park

Leader(s): Nancy Fitzsimmons, 650/938-2106

pkclimber@aol.com

Linda Sun, 408/378-7533

lindasun@sbcglobal.net

This is a wonderful loop with great vistas from the ridge. This hike will be fast and strenuous. Please call the leaders if you haven't hiked with this group. Heavy rain cancels. Carpool: 7:30am at Cubberley High in Palo Alto (Middlefield & Montrose), or, 7:45am at Cottle and Hwy 85 Park&Ride, or, 8:30am at Henry Coe Park Hdqs.

This hike is colisted with the DHS.



Preston Peak via Raspberry

By: Dennis Poulin [losman90@charter.net]

Date Climbed: 24 September 2005

First published on summitpost.org and reprinted here with permission from the author.

I've wanted to climb Preston Peak for several years and I finally made the decision to check this one off my list. Early Saturday morning, September 24, 2005, I got up and headed to the trailhead from my home in Medford, Oregon. It took me about 2 hours to get to the TH. There were a couple small tents

pitched in the middle of the parking area, so I drove around them and parked. I guess I woke up the occupants of the tents because they started stirring and getting dressed. I got my stuff ready and hit the trail about 7:00AM.

The trail is an old roadbed that headed southeast towards Youngs Valley and started to gently climb towards Preston Peak. There are some nice old growth trees in this area and it is easy to see why this is part of the Siskiyou Wilderness. The trail climbed past the fork that goes to Cyclone Gap. I continued straight towards the old chrome mine. At the mine, there was a big arrow made with rocks and sticks in the middle of the trail that pointed the way to go. I took the left fork up through the mine and then the road ended and a real trail began. The trail was good and easy to follow.

The trail went up to about 5300 ft elevation and then switchbacked down to Raspberry Lake. Raspberry Lake looked fantastic, cool and refreshing. I could also see the north ridgeline that leads up to Preston Peak. There were lots of rocks and obstacles. It was going to take a while to get to the summit. I got to Raspberry Lake in less than 3 hours from the trailhead and I felt good. I crossed the lake outlet and continued around the lake to the west side. Here the trail disappeared and I picked my way through trees and brush and then some scree. I climbed the 300 ft up to the ridge. I could see some of the route up the north ridge of Preston Peak. This wasn't going to be a simple walkup.

I followed some "use trails" whenever I could find them, but they kept disappearing. I would continue a few more feet through brush or over rocks and then find another short trail. As I climbed, I noticed there were cairns placed occasionally to mark a route. These cairns continued all the way to the summit. They gave me a feeling of comfort that, occasionally, I was on the right track. There is a subpeak labeled 6121 on the topo that I traversed around the right side. The further up the ridge line I went the more the route was on rock. At about 6500 ft, there was a little snow (less than 1/2 inch) in places. I continued up, in places I had to use my hands to climb up large rocks and this was fun. I noticed up on this ridge there are Brewers Spruce trees. I know these are very rare and only grow in a limited area.

Eventually, I reached the summit on a gorgeous day in Northern California. I could see the Pacific Ocean in the west, to Mt Shasta in the east. Countless peaks surrounded me in all directions. What a beautiful day! I signed the summit register and ate

my lunch. It took me nearly 5 hours to get to the summit, so I took a little extra time and just relaxed. Descending the north ridgeline of Preston Peak back to Raspberry Lake took a long time. I couldn't go very fast down the ridge because it was steep, no real trail, and hands were required in several areas. A Raspberry Lake, I met the four campers that I had seen at the trailhead. They were fishing and filtering water. I didn't linger long because I still had seven miles back to the car. The rest of the trip back to the trailhead was uneventful. The total trip was 17.5 miles and took 10 hours. Total elevation gain was about 4,600ft.



Private Trips

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

For the following 2 trip listings, please contact:

Warren Storkman, 650-493-8959, dstorkman@aol.com

^Date: January 14, 2006

Kilimanjaro, Tanzania [optional safari following]

^Date: May 2006

Mt Kailas in Tibet, or, Meno Nani (7728m) in Tibet



Polemonium Peak

By: Rick Booth [rwbooth@comcast.net]

Date Climbed: 2-4 July 2005

First published on climber.org and is reprinted here with permission from the author.

The plan was to climb Starlight Peak from the glacier by some route. I was looking at Piper at the Gates of Dawn as the target. The only problem was to find a partner. I mentioned the project to my longest climbing pal, Al Peery, and he said he would be interested as long as we climbed North Palisade also. Well, that was a no brainer, the exit route from Starlight was over the top of North Pal and down the U Notch. Al was in.

A trip to the Palisades and the Palisade Glacier is hard to resist and Dee signed up Rob Yang for another trip up North Pal and Arun Mahajan and

Scott Kreider got a permit for the same time period to also climb North Pal. It appeared you wouldn't be able to swing a dead cat on the Palisades Glacier without hitting a PCS member on the July fourth weekend.

Al and I ran into Scott and Arun in the Big Pine Creek parking lot when we pulled in Saturday morning. They were off before we got our act together. Dee and "Rocket Rob" Yang were long gone. About 9:15 Al and I headed up the trail. It was a long slog up to Gayley Camp, near the Northwest corner of Mt Gayley. My favorite camp site was filled in with snow but Dee had found a decent site out of the wind, however, she had to shovel some ice out of the site. Arun and Scott were one "tier" above us on a flat granite slab, also out of the wind. Al ended up a little further away on a sandy spot a little lower. As for "Rocket Rob", Rob had hiked his butt into Gayley Camp so fast he scored himself a dose of altitude sickness. Neither Arun, Scott nor myself saw Rob all weekend but reliable sources, Dee and Al, claimed he was there, in a site a little above Al.

There was only one other party at Gayley Camp, a friendly group from Reno. The mob in the parking lot claiming to be headed for Sill/Polemonium/Starlight/NorthPal/Thunderbolt/whatever were not seen anywhere. As for the sites near the tarn at the terminus of the Palisades Glacier, they were chocked full of snow so deep the big flat rock that everyone tries to camp on was under the snow. There was nobody anywhere near those sites.

Rob decided to stay in camp on Sunday. Dee, then, was to team with Arun and Scott. Arun, Scott and Dee headed out around 6 AM Sunday morning. Al and I were running late, as usual, and got going around 7. At that point I doubted we would have enough time to get up Starlight, make the traverse, and get down the U notch in any reasonable time so we decided to just climb North Pal since I had already climbed Starlight and Al really wanted to climb North Pal.

The 'schrund had a sort of decent snow bridge on the right side, where it usually is. I could see clearly down into the bergschrund when I stepped over it and it was soft even at 9 AM.

Scary. Al made it over, though, and I suppose that is the ultimate test since he weighs in at about 240. We climbed up the U Notch without a rope since the snow was decent and we could kick steps all the way up. Curiously, the left side of the U Notch Couloir had a big icy section.

We caught up with Dee, Arun, and Scott at the top of the U Notch. At this point we decided to rearrange the teams. Al was to join Arun and Scott and climb North Pal and Dee and I were to climb Polemonium. We were all going to get new ascents!

Dee and I borrowed Al's gear and the other half of our 50 meter dual rope system, and set a belay at the top of the U Notch. The first pitch was about 5.4 and headed straight up and then headed right towards a nice shelf system. Maybe 80 feet. This was followed by a fourth class traverse towards the notch visible from the U Notch on the south arete. I stopped just short of the notch. The next pitch goes up into the notch and traverses right around a corner. From there it goes pretty much straight up, no harder than 5.5 or so. With the rope drag I had to stop short of the summit.

As I was climbing this pitch, out of the blue I heard, "Rick, you're gonna die!" The standard Joshua tree greeting caught me by surprise at 14,000 feet and I got a good laugh out of it. It was Al, of course, who was comfortably ensconced about horizontal to me about 150 feet away at the top of the first pitch up the U Notch chimney. Another short pitch and I was on top. Dee followed quickly and we sat on the summit watching our friends work their way through the third and fourth class sections on North Pal. Watching Al looking up at the various options I yelled "Go Right! Go Right!". There are not a lot of places in the Sierras where you can sit on one fourteener and yell directions at friends on another fourteener!

Dee and I rappelled back down into the U Notch. The first rap anchor is just below the summit and has a bunch of decent slings and a hardware store link. We added a poot biner. A double 50 meter system dropped us to the nice ledge at the end of pitch one. A single rope

rappel from a solid flake dropped us back into the U Notch. About an hour round trip to the top from the U Notch. Dee, Scott, Arun and Al were concerned about the softness of the snow and decided to rappel the U Notch. It seemed like the snow held the ice ax quite well so I decided to hike down the couloir. We all ended up rappelling across the bergschrund, though! I was not interested in trying to traipse across the snow bridge at the end of a bright sunny day. We were back in camp before dark.

On Monday, Arun, Scott, and Dee headed out about 8 AM. Al spent a couple of hours fixing up his decrepit pack which had blown out in about three places. Al and I started out about 11 AM. Rob was apparently headed to Sill and/or Gayley, having fully recovered, according to reliable sources. The hike out was uneventful, as usual.

Final notes:

The ascent of Polemonium from the U Notch is easy. The summit is right there overlooking the U Notch. It is so close and easy it is recommended that it be added to an ascent of North Pal via the U Notch, even if it means getting another hour earlier start. It isn't harder than 5.4, with maybe one 5.6 move in there. It is recommended that the leader go all the way to the notch and set the belay there instead of stopping before that. This means the last pitch would go all the way to the top. Depending on the rope drag it is likely that the first pitch can be done all the way to the notch. This means it is possible to go to the top in two pitches. It depends on how comfortable you are with the rope drag. It is not clear if a single rope will get you from the rap anchor on top to the ledge. I doubt if a 50 meter rope will make it and it is possible a 60 meter rope won't make it. There isn't much intermediate, however, so a different rap route might need to be taken. We used a double 50 meter 8.8 mm rope system but a single 60 meter will certainly work for the ascent but the rappel is suspect. A rack of stoppers, small aliens, and cams up to #2 Camalot will work. A double set of anything is unnecessary. A poot biner and sling are useful.

Approach:

The hike up to Gayley Camp or the glacier can be shortened and simplified considerably. The trail goes up a chute as it gets near the glacier and then abruptly folds back to the east to get on top of a rib of rock. The trail then winds around through slabs and involves some traversing on some of the moraine scree. I have been through this twice and it is not the way to go. In the spring or early summer the upper end of the chute near the glacier is full of snow. Go straight up that until the top of the snow, which ends on some dirt but quickly turns into a boulder field. There is usually another snowfield visible and up a little higher. Go across this field. To get to Gayley Camp head slightly to the left and head up to the top of the moraine coming down from the northwest corner of Gayley. After a while a use trail will show up which saves a few hundred yards of knee thrashing boulder hopping. This will bring you to Gayley Camp.

References:

The High Sierra, Peaks, Passes, and Trails, Second Edition, R.J. Secor, The Mountaineers, 1999, ISBN 0-89886-625-1



Return to Irvine and Mallory

By: Tom Becht [bechtt@yahoo.com]

Date Climbed: 1 October 2005

First published on summitpost.org and is reprinted here with permission from the author.

I returned to Meysan Lakes with my dad six weeks after climbing Mt LeConte and Mt Corcoran with a friend in mid-August. The original plan back then was to try to climb Mt Mallory and Mt Irvine as bonus peaks but I seem to be really slow on traverse cross-country hikes and thus ran out of time. My dad and I hiked into Camp Lake just below Upper Meysan late Friday and set-up camp. As I gazed up at the chute coming down from Mallory Plateau, I was struck by the difference six weeks make. The whole plateau and slope were now covered with a healthy blanket of snow. Six weeks ago, only the chutes had icy snow in them and we had used crampons and ice ax to climb up and

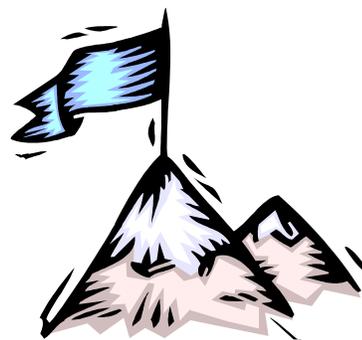
down to the plateau. Have discovered a non-snow route during that climb, I had decided to leave the snow equipment for this trip. Now as I gazed up at this enormous snowfield, I was wishing that I had brought my equipment or possibly even skis. Well, tomorrow would tell soon enough what would happen.

I awoke just after 6AM and was out of the camp by 7AM. For snow gear, all I had was my water repellent boots, my zip-on leggings for my shorts, and my trekking poles. My dad had declined the invitation to climb as he was going to tramp around the basin and read his book. I quickly climbed the low ridge just west of the lake that leads to the northeast ridge of Irvine. I was surprised by the amount of snow even on top of this ridge. A very easy class 2 climb up Irvine's northeast ridge made more interesting by me trying to dodge the deeper snow drifts (and not always succeeding). During the climb, I had a constant view of Whitney, Russell, and the Whitney superhighway with tiny ants slowly inching their way up the trail. The 99 switchbacks were clearly visible as the snow coating enhanced their visibility. Just after 10AM, I stood on the top of Mt Irvine and gazed over the Irvine Bowl at Mallory, contemplating my next step. I also examined the route up Mt McAdie which I was considering as a possible bonus. I had zero beta on McAdie and decided, based on the snow and what I saw (some very sporty class4 work), that I would forgo this impressive peak. I also made the decision that I would approach Mallory via Arc Pass due to the amount of snow in the Irvine basin. I left the final approach decision for later; climb up to the plateau for the class 2 southeastern side or attempt the class 3 northwestern side.

To avoid snow as much as possible, I traversed the ridgeline to the top of the chute leading to Arc Pass instead of dropping down and just cutting across the Irvine basin. The chute was completely clear of snow and the race trail down to Arc Pass clearly visible. From where I stood, I could see that I didn't have to drop down all of the way and could work my way around the various buttresses that spring from the ridgeline peaklets between Irvine and

Mallory. This type of clever thinking is usually what gets me into trouble. I counted the buttresses as I traversed a couple hundred feet below the ridgeline coming to what I thought was the correct chute going back up. Success – a trace trail going up the chute! I climbed up the chute and looked at my options. Hummm – looks harder than the advertised class 3 but looks can be deceiving. I scrambled up to a broad ledge about 100 feet up but found further progress right blocked by a 500 foot vertical drop. I then scrambled around left and came face to face with a class 4 icy crack going most of the way up. After trying twice and avoiding the ice, I made it up the crack and scrambled to the top ... and looked over at the northwest face of Mallory. Damn!

I began to down climb my peaklet's vertical wall facing Mallory as it appeared the blocky composition would afford me enough ledges to the bottom. Here's the cleverness thing again. To get to lower blocks, I had to grab a jutting rock and swing like a monkey over 800ft of thin air. And, yes, the nice ledges disappeared into (from my vantage point) a class 5+ smooth face. OK, I've made some moves that I'm not sure I can reverse and even then it would take me at least another hour to get back to the bottom of the chute that I ascended to get to this peaklet. Adrenalin is pumping as I'm able to reverse my moves (monkey swing upward and all) and I'm back on top of the peaklet. I'm in luck because the north side facing the Irvine basin is snowy but an easy class 3 down to the gap between the peaklet and Mallory. After that, the scramble to the top of Mallory is fun but definitely anticlimactic (I even passed the high point by mistake). The views are stunning and I am quite happy to have completed this part of the adventure. In retrospect, Mt McAdie wouldn't have been any more difficult and time wise probably about the same. It had taken me (in my cleverness) just over 3 hours to traverse from Irvine to Mallory – something that I now know can be done in an hour.



The descent from Mallory to the snowy plateau is uneventful but my doggedness for avoiding snow abruptly comes to an end. Leggings and trekking poles are pulled out of the pack and readied. I start walking towards the center chute since it's the one I've hiked before. Plunge stepping and post holing sometimes up to my knee and sometimes up to my hip, I make it to the top of the chute, brush the snow out from inside tops of my boots, and begin descending. What 6 weeks ago was a cautious hard snow descent (missed with some glissading) is now just wading through the deep snow. I do attempt to glissade a couple of times but just end up with snow up my back. I hike to the left side lip of the chute where there is practically no snow, shaking the snow out of my boots and socks, and hike down a reasonable snowless scree trail to where the chute narrows halfway down. Back in the middle of the chute I plunge step all of the way down in 2 feet of snow with a stiff ice breeze at my back. I reach Meysan Lake at last and perform one final shakeout of my boots and socks.

My post-hike analysis concludes that I had a great adventure with perfect weather but a bit too much cleverness. The final chapter of the trip closes back at home as I peruse the PBS Nova webpage [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/everest/lost] on the ill-fated Everest expedition which results in the loss of George Mallory and Andrew Irvine – the name sakes of my outing's two peaks.



Where'd He Go??!

“Uh-Oh....I thought Billy-Bob was right behind me...”

Ever experience this little bit of panic on a trip? You're walking along, trail or no trail, and, as a leader, you really do think everyone is together, and, if not together, capable of figuring out how to get from trailhead parking to basecamp, but, not to be. Billy-Bob is really lost and it's dark and who you gonna call?? SEARCH AND RESCUE!

On the Peninsula, we have our very own SAR group: BAMRU, short for Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit. BAMRU is an all-volunteer group who are composed of climbers, mountaineers, and backpackers who train in a variety of skills used for wilderness rescue. In an interview with Will Hirst, long-time member of BAMRU, he commented that most of the people who join are hikers and climbers, “Climbers often join as they're very goal oriented. They'll find a person [and] do whatever it takes. Some have a medical background, some don't.”

One of the founding fathers of BAMRU is a familiar name to PCS'ers: George Barnes. George was around when PCS was just starting – back in the day when ropes and all sorts of equipment could be used without checking-in with anyone. BAMRU was incorporated in the early '70's with its home originally in the East Bay; now, it's in San Mateo. BAMRU gets their calls from the San Mateo County Sheriff's office, or, the OES [Office of Emergency Services] for the State of California. The OES alerts rescue units for 'mutual aid' or when another team, sometimes in the Sierra or Cascade ranges, needs assistance. A recent search was about a week ago, in Pacifica, where Will's team found a man with Alzheimer's who had been lost all day in the coast-side hills. They'll get calls for Yosemite, East Bay Regional Parks, coast side parks and suburban areas in San Mateo County.

Why SAR? “I joined BAMRU when I first moved to this area. I'd heard about them when I was in San Diego SAR. I like helping people in the outdoors.” While searches last anywhere from a few hours to a week, members are expected to operate in the field autonomously and without support, for up to 72 hours. Self-sufficiency is the word.

When asked if there was a seasonal pattern to search-and-rescues, Will commented that for a while, it was right after the first big storm hit in the Sierra, “Typically, a hunter in their cotton shirt, out in the sleet, needed a rescue. Nowadays, it's unpredictable.”



For more information on BAMRU, see their website at: <http://www.bamru.org>



Free Seminar - Patient Assessment Skill Practice

Come to a free evening seminar for anyone who has taken a wilderness first aid class and wishes to practice their patient assessment skills. *Fun and lots and lots of practice.*

November 10, San Francisco, 7-10pm.

Contact BAWT at www.bawt.org or call Todd at 415-788-3666 x 122. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Bobbie at bobbie@fostercalm.com

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Scree is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter.

Our official website is [http:// lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/](http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/)

Email List Info

If you are on the official email list (lomap-pcs-announce@lists.sierraclub.org) or the email list the PCS feeds (pcs-issues@climber.org), you have a free EScree subscription. For email list details, send "info lomap-pcs-announce" to "listserv@lists.sierraclub.org", or send anything to "info@climber.org". EScree subscribers should send a subscription form to the Treasurer to become voting PCS members at no charge. The Scree is on the web as both plain text and fully formatted Adobe Acrobat/PDF.

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 Fri, Nov 25th. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



Peak Climbing Section, 789 Daffodil Way, San Jose CA 95117

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

First Class Mail - Dated Material