

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

General Meeting

Date: November 14, 2006
Time: 7:30 pm
Where: Peninsula Conservation Center
3921 E. Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA

Program: West Buttress of Denali

Presenter: Dan Tupper

The great white summit of Denali dominates the Alaskan countryside between Anchorage and Fairbanks. This 20,300 foot summit is notorious for Acute Mountain Sickness and bad weather at any time of year. This program will show a climb up the West Buttress of Denali starting at the glacier landing strip on the Kahiltna glacier.

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 is pleased to announce the following slate of candidates for 2006-2007. Election of PCS officers occurs at the November meeting and additional nominations, if any, will also be accepted from the floor, at the meeting. The meeting will be on the 14th of November. Elected officials take office right away.

Chair: Kelly Maas
Vice chair: Lisa Barboza
Treasurer: Toinette Hartshorne

-- The PCS Nominating Committee
Debbie Benham
Bob Suzuki
Arun Mahajan

PCS Trips

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

Snow Camping Seminar

Class sessions; Jan 18, 23, and 25

Field session: Feb 3-4

Leaders; Kelly Maas, Chris MacIntosh & Charles Schafer

kellylanda@sbcglobal.net,
c_g_schafer@yahoo.com

cmaci@sbcglobal.net,

Learn to be comfortable in the snow; all day and all night! This course teaches participants the basics for camping, staying comfortable, and surviving the snow. Items discussed in the course include hypothermia, cold weather 1st aid, clothing, ski and snowshoe gear, packs, cooking, shelters (including tents, emergency shelters, and snow caves), route finding, and avalanche awareness. Participants must be familiar and comfortable with summer backpacking. In the field session, participants will apply what they have learned including constructing various snow shelters, cooking, and adapting to the environment. Participants will either snowshoe or ski into the field area. To sign-up, contact Chris MacIntosh and send \$40. Cost for the course includes a book and other printed material.

Trip Reports

Autumnal Indulgence:

Mystery Peak 6687'

By Debbie Benham

It's been a longer time than I can remember that I started a peak climb at ten in the morning.☺ Try it – you'll like it. Our hike started at the O'Shaughnessy Dam, Hetch-Hetchy Reservoir, sans bears. BUT, we did see a couple musicians gearing up for a wedding that was to be performed that day, right on the dam walkway. A beautiful fall day, lovely weather, a few puffy clouds in the early afternoon, a slight breeze and we couldn't have asked for anything more. 'Course, cold at night, but, not as cold as expected given the falling temps of late.

I'd been meaning to visit the Hetch-Hetchy area for several years, but, since there were no known peaks, I'd not gone. While reading my 'California Explorer', I saw an article by Carl Raillard (March/April 2006) and he spoke of a peak in the Hetch-Hetchy area that seemed perfect for a dayhike. The area was reminiscent of Yosemite Valley: on the left one could sort of make out a mini-El Cap; on the right, sort of a mushed Half-Dome; and granite cliffs towering further up the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne. The trail was well-marked and well-trod, and, the bit of ridge-line, off-trail hiking we did, was straightforward. Besides, Joerg had his GPS!! Nice granite boulders and slabs on the top of 6687' with gnarly trees and pine needle padding most of the way up and down.



Hetch-Hetchy

Something to remember: hiking around the reservoir is strictly monitored. Day use is permitted between the hours of 8am to 7pm. The day parking pass that is given to your driver at the kiosk warns that if you're not out by 7pm, you can be fined \$5,000 or up to 6 months in jail. There were

a few witty remarks about being put in the slammer for an extended stay...



Summit Group Picture

An information byte on *Tuolumne* (as in Grand Canyon of the): Mariano Vallejo, in his report to the first California State Legislature, said that the Native American word is a "...corruption of the Indian word *talmalamne* which signified 'cluster of stone wigwams.' " The name may mean "people who dwell in stone houses", ie: caves.

Thanks to all who came: Debbie Benham (leader and scribe); Alan Duvall, Amanda Jobbins, Joerg Lohse (co-leader), Arun Mahajan, and Dot Reilly.

-- Debbie Benham

Mt Ruskin and Arrow Peak

1/2/3/4 Sept, 2006.
by Arun Mahajan

Over the Labour Day weekend, the two of us, Arun Mahajan and Tony Stegman, attempted these two peaks starting from the Taboose Pass trailhead. Tony's Honda had to be driven carefully over the access dirt road but it handled the road well and by 8.45am, we were walking. The slog has been well described by many others but suffice to say that everytime I go up this thing I promise myself that this would be the last. In about six and half hours we were at the top of the pass looking toward our destinations, Arrow and Ruskin further to the west. The Bench Lake trail starts from here and it is about five miles to Bench Lake but we went about three miles or so to the junction with the JMT and camped nearby. We ran into several trail workers on this section of the trail. After meeting the JMT, the Bench Lake trail runs with it for a short distance and after a stream crossing at a meadow, veers off south-west and the JMT continues south toward

Pinchot Pass. Our camp site was in the trees a few hundred feet away from this junction.



On the next day, Saturday, we started off at about 6.30am and went back east on the BL Trail till the JMT junction and then walked north (left) through the woods. This trail goes down quite a bit and intersects a small stream and then further on intersects the Kings River. We went past this intersection (marked with a sign for Mather and Pinchot Passes) to a place where a small but flowing stream cuts it. We set waypoints here () and then decided to walk up this stream's drainage. This is a long walk and soon we started to wander a bit but stuck with it till a meadow from where we could see Ruskin's east ridge clearly and to our right was a tall spire. This makes me think that we were on the stream that flows down from the North Ruskin Lake.

The startling shark-fin ridge of Ruskin



ends on a flatter ridge and so we made our way to the flat portion and then went east to get close to the toe of our target.

It looks impossible to get onto the ridge at the toe, without ropes anyway, because it is all blocky and

vertically stacked. So, remembering instructions from previous trip reports and email conversations with Rick, Scott K, Linda Sun and Dee, we traversed left on the south side trying to look for easier options. Seemingly, the more left you go from the toe, the better it looked. We tried two options but at that point Tony felt that this was something that would take him a longer time to get over and with the potential of harder climbing further on, wisely decided that he had better turn back. We consulted and considered our options. It was a good weather day, it was only 10am and it did not seem too difficult to get to camp from there, given that we both had GPS-es and maps. We parted ways with him going to camp and me deciding to solo it and turning around if that would be too hard. But it was perhaps a bit harder than 3rd class (John Bees calls this 3.7 in his TR!) and very soon I was on the top of the ridge, close to a cairn that someone had previously placed there. I looked up towards the ridge and could see a clean route.

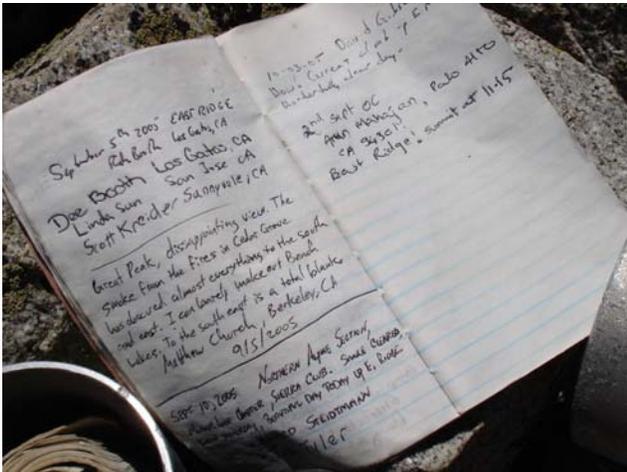


The mythical jetstream that lurks around these ridges seeking sufficiently awestruck climbers found me and propelled me on, the same one that had found Rick's party last year. The climb was so much interesting and fun and the rock so solid that I did not even stop to get food or a drink and kept moving up. The exposure is amazing. It was a beautiful day with a slight chill in the wind. How much better could it get? As I got to the false summit I could see the broad slope on the left (south) and that looked like a descent route and sure enough, just before the false summit, there was a duck (thank you, whoever...).

Then came the technically hardest part. The ridge path was blocked by a horizontal rock resting on top and overhanging a vertical one. I looked left, no go. Just vertical columns. Initially the right looked like that too but everybody had gone that way and looking further, I could see a small ledge, maybe the width of a boot, so I walked on it and where it ended there looked to be a few options to help you get over back onto the ridge, a flake, a crack and perhaps a few more.



The exposure is hideous but the move is not more than 4th class (or really easy fifth?) and really short. I added a 2-stone duck there. That would be useful for me on the way back and also environmentally sound. In a few more minutes, I was at the summit. I saw that I was the first entry for this year. It was only 11.15am then.



I reversed my way and now instead of using the crack to get down I used the flake and again it did not give me trouble. Past the fake summit where the duck was, I went down the descent path. It is steep but class two and that got me to the bowl that had the South Ruskin Lake but I stayed higher curving left past the toe of the east ridge and down to the stream in the meadow and after a quick

lunch, found my drainage and got back to the JMT at 1.20pm. Some quick walking on the uphill JMT got me back to camp at 2.10pm much to Tony's surprise as he was expecting me by about pm or so. He reported that he had found getting back to camp from the east ridge easy as well.

The next day, we started off at about 6.15am to climb Arrow. The Bench Lake Trail from the JMT junction is very scenic and very soon the lake and the reflection of Arrow in its still waters comes to view.



The lake is long and the trail skirts it from the west (right) and goes to the other end. We saw the same trail crew there. Following instructions from Rick's report, we went up the drainage of a small stream that inlets into the lake. We were soon in a forest and the NE Ridge of Arrow was partially in view and we made a beeline for it and this involved dropping down to a river and crossing it. Soon we were at the toe of the ridge and started going up on easy class-3 terrain. After a short while the trees give way and one is on open terrain and on the ridge.



We kept climbing and at two occasions decided to escape the ridge because of the steep vertical slabs on the route. In the first case, a little lower than where the SW Ridge

meets it, we escaped by working our way via ledges on the left and in the second case, a little higher up, after the meeting of the ridges (now on the east ridge proper) by going right. These escapes were probably not necessary but we wanted to keep the climbing to the level safe and quick for both of us. I topped out on the summit just before noon and Tony came up a few minutes later.



Arrow had a few entries for this year. We had great views all around and after a 45 min loll at the summit we started the descent. We sighted Bench Lake and saw that to get to it we would have to go to a meadow that was bordered by the same river that we had crossed on the way up but much more north and to get to that meadow, from what we could see from the summit, we would have to get to a plateau formed between Arrow and a smaller peak south of it. We started by just dropping down on the south side of Arrow. This is class-2. Initially steep but then not too bad as one walks on the sand between the rocks. The plateau drops steeply and there was some corniced snow there and a descent looked improbable but we peered down and sure enough, we could see a couple of steep descent chutes and we just picked one. This was nasty and it would have been bad had we been a larger party but even with the two of us we were inadvertently knocking down debris. After that it

was continued hell but the steepness had reduced a little and things were not loose. After getting to the meadow, we crossed the river and then stayed high and our path traced a right curving arc that got us back to Bench Lake where we startled a fisherman who happened to be the same trail crew member that we had met earlier that day and two days ago on our way in.



The walk on the Bench Lake Trail also soon ended getting our tired legs into camp a few minutes before 5pm making it an almost 11 hr day.

On Labor Day, we packed up and walked down in five hours.

Thanks are due to all the information and guidance provided by Rick, Scott, Dee and Linda via email conversations and also via Rick's report in the Jan-06 SCREE of the climb that he and his group did a year ago. Also, the reports on Climber.Org of John Bees and Steve Eckert helped. Also, congratulations to Tony Stegman for doing what may be his hardest and in his own words, his most rewarding climb when he went up Arrow.

For books, we used RJ Secor and the first edition of the 100 Classic Climbs by Fiddler and Moynier. Arrow figures in that book, obviously for its elegant line. However, Ruskin is the superior climb not only for its clean line but also because it is a true knife edged ridge on solid Sierra rock with tremendous exposure.

-- Arun Mahajan

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 trip listing, please contact:

Jeff Fisher 408-733-1299 Jeff_fisher_5252@sbcglobal.net

•Date: November 18-19, 2006

Pinnacles National Monument

Hike, Bike, and Climb

Class 1 to 5 depending on what you want to do

Co Leader: Rick Booth rwbooth@comcast.net

For the following trip listing, please contact:

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

•Date: January 2007

Peak: Kilimanjaro

Location: Tanzania, optional safari following

For the following trip listing, please contact:

Jeff Fisher, 408-733-1299, jeff_fisher_5252@sbcglobal.net

•Date: January/February 2007

Peak: Ojo del Salado (22,300')

Location: South America

Elected Officials

Chair:

Tom Driscoll / pcschair2006@sbcglobal.net
2149 Junction Ave #3, Mountain View, CA 94043
650-938-2106 home

Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler:

Bill Kirkpatrick / pcs2006@earthlink.net
28 N. First St #100, San Jose, CA 95113
408-497-2957 work

Treasurer and Membership Roster (address changes):

Landa Robillard / kellylanda@sbcglobal.net
408-378-5311 home

Publicity Committee Positions

Scree Editor:

NN

PCS World Wide Web Publisher:

Rick Booth / rwbooth@comcast.net
237 San Mateo Av., Los Gatos, CA 95030
408-354-7291 home

Publicity Chair:

Paul Vlasveld / pvasvel@yahoo.com
789 Daffodil Way, San Jose, CA 95117
408-247-6472 home

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 Sunday, November 26th. 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