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## PCS Annual Holiday Party

**Date**      **December 14, 2010**

**Time**        **7:00 – 10:00 pm**

**Where**        **Aaron Schuman's - The  
Whisman Station  
Clubhouse  
420 Kent Drive  
Mountain View, CA**

Meeting Location (click for directions):

[Aaron Schuman's - The Whisman Station Clubhouse](#)

Come to the 35th annual PCS Festivus party, on Tuesday, December 14, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at the Whisman Station clubhouse, at 420 Kent Dr., Mountain View.

Bring a potluck dish that you will be proud to share with your fellow climbers. Bring 35 mm slides or a CD or flashdrive with 10 or 12 of your most thrilling climbing photos, from this year or from long ago. We'll provide projector and screen. Bring your family and friends. Bring a swimsuit and a towel if you envision yourself dipping in the clubhouse hot tub. (Yes, a swimsuit! What? You think this is Tenaya Lake?)

Here's your assignment:

A – D - appetizer  
E – I - salad  
J – N - main course  
O – S – dessert  
T – Z – beverages

In addition, feel free to bring your alcoholic beverage of choice, and of course, since we are a green organization, bring your own plate, cup, and eating utensils.

See you there!

### **Editor's Notes**

There's a variety of reports this month, mostly from the summer, but be sure to read Part 2 of Arun's epic trip. You will have a new (or renewed) respect for him once you experience his adventure vicariously.

And very important, we have an all-female group of officers for the next year. I love it! Happy Holidays, everyone, and see you at the Party! Judy Molland

### **Chair Column**

Well, the year is coming to an end. There is snow in the mountains, the climbing season is mostly over and our activities are decreasing a bit. But don't despair! We do have some trips scheduled for the winter, including to

major sierra peaks. And don't forget about the Christmas party. Our party committee is in high gear and I am sure that it will be fun and a great opportunity for telling all of us about what you climbed this year.

But perhaps the most important change is that you will have a new set of elected officials. Emilie has lots of great ideas and have promised exciting changes. Please give her your support!

### **New PCS Officers Elected**

The PCS Nominating Committee is happy to announce that the PCS officer elections were conducted at the November PCS meeting by ballot (9th Nov, 2010) and all the nominated officers were unanimously elected.

For the 2011 term, these are the officers:

Chair: Emilie Cortes

Vice-chair: Louise Wholey

Treasurer: Sonja Dieterich

They take office from January 2011. Congratulations to the new team and thank you for volunteering to serve the PCS! We also wish to thank the outgoing team of elected officers, Jesper Schou, Louise Wholey and Emilie Cortes and nominated officers, Judy Molland, Joe Baker, Steve Eckert, Lisa Barboza and Kelly Maas for doing a stellar job during their term in office.

The PCS Nominating Committee: Lisa Barboza, Jesper Schou and Arun Mahajan

### **Bios of the new PCS elected officers**

#### **Emilie Cortes (Chair)**

Emilie Cortes has served as Treasurer of the PCS and is also a leader and Steering Committee member of the Sierra Club Snowcamping section. Her passion is high-altitude glacier climbing, but after a few years of setting her sights on a single big objective and not summiting, she's focused on Sierra and Cascades peak bagging to satisfy her restless nature. She wishes she had known about the PCS when she became obsessed with climbing in 2004 as she didn't know a soul that climbed and had to employ guides in order to learn the basics. She's passionate about empowering others to reach for their goals whether personal (like climbing) and professional, and she also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Assn of Women MBAs. For her day job, she is a Senior Consultant at Alan Biller and Associates serving union pension plans.

#### **Louise Wholey (Vice-Chair/Scheduler)**

Louise has recently been active in the PCS since 2006 and has served as Scree editor, chair, and vice-chair/scheduler. For each of the past few years she has been climbing 35-40 peaks and has now climbed 242 of the 248 peaks on the SPS (Angeles Chapter) list.

#### **Sonja Dieterich (Treasurer)**

Sonja Dieterich was born in Darmstadt, Germany to a mother who loved spending any vacation time she had hiking in the Alps. The Sunday afternoon walk in the woods is a local tradition. "At age 4 1/2, my mom & Dad started to take me along to hike in the Alps. After a short fall on a steep meadow, a rope harness with leash was constructed for safety. Since then, I have been an avid hiker, then got into backpacking, loved the Via Ferratas in Europe, and always longingly gazed to the wild places off-trail high up. On

Memorial Day 2009 I went to the first peak climbing trip with Louise and Jim Wholey, and got hooked. I am still a beginner at peak climbing, but the PCS members have been just great at welcoming me to the mountains, and teaching me along the way. As they say in Austria: Berg heil! (transl: be safe in your mountain endeavors)."

### **New Trip Rating System**

(with thanks to Louise Wholey)

We are extending the system for rating for PCS trips to include a rating that will describe the effort required. The new PCS rating system is a series of three designations from the following groups:

Miles (to summit the peak)

- 1 = Less than 5 miles of total distance
- 2 = 5 to 10 miles
- 3 = 10 to 15 miles
- 4 = 15 to 20 miles
- 5 = 20 to 25 miles

Climb

- A = Less than 1000 feet of total elevation gain
- B = 1000 to 2000 feet
- C = 2000 to 3000 feet
- D = 3000 to 4000 feet
- E = 4000 to 5000 feet

Travel

- T = Trail
- 1 = Limited/easy X-C
- 2 = Moderate X-C
- 3 = Strenuous/difficult X-C

A trip rated as 2D3 means that the trip will be five to ten miles long to reach the peak with nearly 4,000 feet of climbing at times over strenuous/difficult cross country terrain.

Peak climbs typically have three phases:

- 1) backpacking to camp (often on a trail),
- 2) the peak climb (usually only a few miles but X-C with lots of climbing),
- 3) the return to the trailhead.

Rather than make this too complex for leaders, we will start by using this system for an over-all rating of the trip. If a trip, however, has one day that is particularly strenuous, the leader should identify that day as having special demands and give a separate rating for that day as well as the over-all trip. Longer trips climbing multiple peaks probably require a rating for each day, but leaders may wish initially to rate just the hardest day of the trip.

Class ratings will continue to be used to describe the technical difficulty of a climb.

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.

Please note: most trips listed below do not yet follow the new system (except for Emilie's - thank you!), but these new ratings will be in place for upcoming trips listed here.

### **Advanced Trip Schedule**

On October 19th, an [Advanced Trip Schedule](#) was proposed. This schedule is only intended for planning purposes. In many cases, permits have not yet been secured and dates and destinations may change.

### **Tim Hult Request - Please Read!**

(Posted separately since dates will vary, depending on snow conditions.)

1) I am willing to act as coordinator for a one night weekend trip to Ostrander. Payment must be advance (\$60 night) before I submit names for the lottery. Please contact me at: timothy.hult(at) gd-ais.com to discuss your interest.

2) Shasta winter ascent. Doing a winter ascent of Shasta can be a tricky affair

involving waiting and watching for the perfect weather window that matches your schedule. Contact me to be put on an email / discussion list. We will do either the Cassaval or Sargent's ridge route. Participants must have arctic appropriate gear.

3) Also but with no descriptions: I'd like to try another spring tour this year, or, simply do some spring yo-yo skiing as well. This past year would have been a terrific one to do some of the high trail head passes on skis as day trips and I feel bad that I missed them.

### **PCS Trip Calendar**

These are required statements.

Note: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

Note: All Sierra Club trips require you to sign a Liability Waiver.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/signinwaiver.pdf>

December 4, 5 - Pahrump Pt, Stewart Pt.  
Leader: Daryn Dodge

January 8, 2011 - Junipero Serra  
Leader: Lisa Barboza

January 18 + other dates - Loma Prieta's Snow Camping Seminar  
Leader: Chris MacIntosh

February 12, 13 - Donner Summit Dayhikes  
Leader: Joe Baker

March 20 - Round Top  
Leader: Arun Mahajan

March 26, 27 - Cone Peak  
Leader: Joe Baker

March 26, 27 - Sandy Point, Last Chance Mt.  
Leader: Daryn Dodge

### **PCS Trip Details**

#### **Pahrump Point and Stewart Point**

Goals: Pahrump Pt.(5,740'), Stewart Pt. (5,265')

Location: Just east of Death Valley NP

Date: December 4, 5

Leader: Daryn Dodge

Difficulty: Rated I

From the Desert Peaks Section:

Pahrump Point (5740') and Stewart Point (5265'): Join us for one or both of these fine DPS-listed limestone peaks just east of Death Valley National Park. Saturday climb Pahrump Point (3400' gain, 8 miles). Happy hour Saturday night. Sunday climb Stewart Point (2600' gain, 6.5 miles). Send e-mail with conditioning and experience to

Leader: Daryn Dodge [ddodge@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:ddodge@oehha.ca.gov)

or Co-leader: Kathy Rich

[kathrynrich@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynrich@gmail.com).

#### **Junipero Serra**

Goal: Junipero Serra (5,862')

Location: Junipero Serra, King City

Date: January 8, 2011

Leader: Lisa Barboza

Difficulty: Class 1

This is an annual January Loma Prieta Peak Climbing Section tradition. It's a 12-mile round-trip to the summit of the peak. We'll be carpooling from San Jose for this trip as it is a 150 mile drive to the trailhead.

This peak is the highest in the Santa Lucia range. On the summit, we'll find exotic ponderosa pine, white fir, and other plants normally associated with the Sierra. We'll start at the trailhead at 10AM, summit by 2PM and be back at the cars by 4PM. This is a class 1 day hike open to all.

Contact Lisa Barboza at [Lisa.Barboza\(at\)gd-ais.com](mailto:Lisa.Barboza(at)gd-ais.com)

## **Loma Prieta's Snow Camping Seminar**

Goal: Preparation for Camping Happily in Snow!

Location: Junipero Serra, King City

Date: January 18 + others

Leader: Chris MacIntosh

Snow camping allows you to backpack in all seasons. By snowshoeing or skiing far into the wilderness, you can visit the Sierras with its thick layer of snow and enjoy the scenery far from the crowds; no competition for the "best" campsites! The skills obtained from the Loma Prieta's Snow Camping Seminar prepare you for camping happily in the snow, and give tips for day skiers or snowshoers caught out overnight. Participants must be experienced summer backpackers as this course will give you winter information and tips but doesn't teach basic backpacking.

Three evenings, held in the Stanford Palo Alto area on Jan 18, 20, & 25, and one weekend field trip on Jan 29-30, 2011. Limit 40 participants for the evening classroom sessions, and 25 participants on the outing. \$40 cost includes books, instruction, and some common equipment used on field trip. To sign up, send \$40 check, payable to BSCS, to P.O. Box 802, Menlo Park, CA 94026. Include name & email of each person, phone #, Sierra Club member number (if oversubscribed, preference will be given to members). Upon receipt, we will acknowledge and send info and directions.

Questions? Contact Chris MacIntosh at 650/325-7841, [cmaci@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmaci@sbcglobal.net), or Steve Sergeant at 408/937-8116, [steve.sergeant@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:steve.sergeant@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org).

## **Donner Summit Dayhikes on Skis/Snowshoes**

Goals: Mt. Judah (8,245'), Boreal Ridge

Location: Donner Summit, near Truckee

Dates: February 12, 13

Leader: Joe Baker

Difficulty: Beginner/Intermediate Level Skiing

We will stay at the Southbay Ski Club lodge at Donner Summit, and do day trips. One day, we will climb Mt. Judah, and the other day we will do a loop from Highway 80 to Highway 40, following the PCT on the way there and coming over Boreal Ridge on the way back. Destinations may change based on snow conditions. Contact Judy Molland at [judy@judymolland.com](mailto:judy@judymolland.com).

## **Round Top**

Goal: Round Top (10,381')

Location: Carson Pass

Date: March 20

Leader: Arun Mahajan

Difficulty: Intermediate Level Skiing

Day hike on snow, ice-axe, crampons, skis or snowshoes. Skis with skins or snowshoes needed for the approach then ice-axe and crampons for the summit area.

Meet at 8am at Carson Pass Sno-Park on Highway-88, ready to go. To park there you will need a sno-park permit.

Difficulty: Snow/winter conditions but otherwise intermediate level skiing and you have to have some experience with axe/crampons and be able to handle the altitude of over 10k ft, early in the season. Contact Arun Mahajan at [arun.mahajan@att.net](mailto:arun.mahajan@att.net)

## **Cone Peak**

Goal: Cone Peak (5,155')

Location: Ventana Wilderness, Limekiln campground

Dates: March 26, 27

Leader: Joe Baker

Difficulty: Class 1

We will climb Cone Peak from Highway 1. Cone Peak is the most spectacular mountain on the Big Sur coast of California. It is the second highest mountain (Junipero Serra Peak is higher) in the Santa Lucia Range. The trip is on-trail but somewhat strenuous. This will either be a dayhike, or we'll camp at

Vicente Flat and do the longer loop. I'm leaning toward the second option because Lime Kiln Campground (trailhead at the ocean) is still closed due to the fire. With the second option, we can take a leisurely hike up to our camp spot, where we'll spend the night on Saturday, then climb our peak on Sunday morning, before hiking out. This should be an excellent time to see lots of wildflowers.

### **Sandy Point and Last Chance Mountain**

Goal: Sandy Pt, Last Chance Mt.

Location: Death Valley

Dates: March 26, 27

Leader: Daryn Dodge

Another DPS- sponsored trip. More details to follow.

### **Private Trip Calendar**

Important: 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 Scree editor.

December 14 - 30 - Kilimanjaro, Mt. Meru  
Leader: Daryn Dodge

December 18 - 23 - Williamson and Tyndall  
Leader: Emilie Cortes

March 11-13 - Split Mountain  
Leader: Lisa Barboza

June 30 - July 16 - Uganda Trip  
Leader: Emilie Cortes

October - Mt. Kailash, Nepal/Tibet  
Leader: Warren Storkman

### **Private Trip Details**

#### **Kilimanjaro and Mt. Meru**

Goals: Kilimanjaro (19,341'), Mt. Meru (14,980')

Location: Tanzania

Date: December 14 - 30

Leader: Daryn Dodge

For more information, contact Daryn Dodge at [ddodge@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:ddodge@oehha.ca.gov)

#### **Williamson and Tyndall**

Goals: Williamson (14,370'), Tyndall (14,019')

Location: Eastside of the Sierras

Date: December 18 - 23

Leader: Emilie Cortes

Difficulty: Intermediate/Advanced; 2D3 with class 3 winter climbing

Climb two coveted California 14ers in winter. This is a private trip and participation will be subject to the leaders' discretion given the difficulty of the trip.

Snowcamping, winter backcountry travel (either skis or snowshoes OK), and crampon/ice axe experience required, as well as proven ability to acclimatize. An adventurous attitude is also required as winter climbing can be challenging and require tough decisions. You should be prepared to carry a heavy pack (45-55lbs) for anywhere from 6-14 hours each day. The pace will be moderate but good endurance is necessary.

I would categorize this as an intermediate/advanced trip, more for the physical challenge than the climbing. Using the backpacking trip ratings, it would be a 2D3 with class 3 winter climbing over 5 days. Led by Emilie Cortes & Lisa Barboza. Contact Emilie Cortes at [mountaineerchica\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:mountaineerchica(at)gmail.com).

## **Split Mountain**

Goal: Split Mountain (14,042')

Location: Big Pine, Eastside of the Sierras

Date: March 11 - 13

Leader: Lisa Barboza

Difficulty: Intermediate/Advanced; 2D3 with class 2 winter climbing

Another prized winter 14er. Winter backcountry travel and snowcamping skills highly recommended.

This is an intermediate/advanced trip and you must have previous crampon/ice axe experience. You should have a solid backpacking/hiking foundation to carry a heavy pack, a proven ability to acclimatize, and an adventurous attitude as winter climbing can be challenging and require tough decisions. Many winter attempts do not result in a summit as conditions typically must be ideal. Possibly includes Prater and Tinemaha. Led by Lisa Barboza, co-led by Emilie Cortes. Contact Lisa Barboza at Lisa.Barboza(at)gd-ais.com

## **Uganda Trip**

Goal: Mountains of the Moon

Location: Uganda

Date: June 30 - July 16

Leader: Emilie Cortes

Difficulty: TBD

Trip to Uganda: includes trekking and climbing in the famous "Mountains of the Moon" – the Ruwenzoris, gorilla tracking, and rafting the Nile. Planning is in early stages and tentative dates are 6/30/11-7/16/11. Contact Emilie Cortes at mountaineeringchica(at)gmail.com directly to be kept apprised of details.

## **Mt. Kailash, Nepal/Tibet**

Goal: Mt. Kailash - Lhasa

Location: Nepal/Tibet

Date: October 2011

Leader: Warren Storkman

October is generally the best month to travel in Nepal and Tibet - for weather and holiday

events and particularly for the Kora around Mt Kailash.

Reason for starting the plans early:

To give the opportunity to arrange vacation time for the 21 day trek, the 7 days in KTM and air travel.

There will be two separate flights within Nepal.

The first flight will take us west to a large lowland airport with a hotel overnight. The second day we'll fly in a smaller (20 seat) plane and upon landing will start the trek.

There will be 6 nights of camping then on the 7th day the group crosses into Tibet with an interesting army border check. This entry is by foot - no roads in this area.

The group will then stop camping and use a hotel on the 14th night.

For those wishing to skip Lhasa a return to KTM is on the 16th day. The Lhasa group will return to KTM on the 21st day by international air.

Without a commitment or obligating yourself just let me know if this trip is of interest to you. If you change your mind, I'll drop your name.

I'll e-mail more information and try for an early trip cost. Contact Warren Storkman (650-493-8959) or email: dstorkman@aol.com

## **Trip Reports**

### **Mt. Thompson and Mt. Powell**

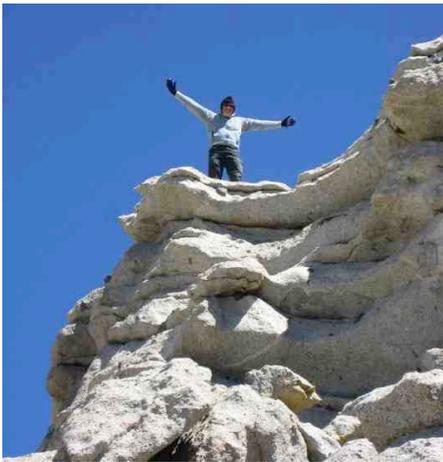
**August 21 - 23, 2010**

**By Aaron Schuman**

On August 22, 2010, we climbed Mt Thompson and Mt Powell. Our team was Linda Sun, Harry Xie, Alex Sapozhnikov, Dara Hazeghi, co-leader Ron Karpel, and me, trip leader and reporter.

On Saturday, we hiked up from Lake Sabrina, at the headwaters of the north fork of Bishop Creek. We passed a chain of lakes with fanciful names, settling in for the evening at Middle Baboon Lake. We might have pushed ahead higher, to Sunset Lake, but the wind had picked up and the high lake is above the timberline and exposed to the weather.

Sunday, the double summit day, Harry settled back in camp with an issue of the *Atlantic* and an issue of *Harper's*. The rest of us worked our way up a long talus slope and a snow filled col between our two destination peaks. We dropped down a bit and traversed a sandy face to Mt Thompson, then up a scree chute to the plateau. The summit (13,494') is a weirdly eroded block about 10 meters in size. Linda snapped the trip photo of Ron on that strange rock.



*Looking Down on Evolution Country*

Ron and Dara returned to camp the way we came. Linda, Alex and I followed the "Eckert Variation" up the south side of Mt Powell. It's a broad and sheltered ramp that leads to a muddy chute. The top of the chute was still corniced in late August. Up above, there was another plateau, with another eroded knob, the summit (13,360'). The wind had died down, so we had a chance to linger over the long vistas south into Evolution Valley and the Ionian Basin, and north to Mt Humphreys and Mt Tom.

Monday was a straightforward hike back from our camp to the road head at Lake Sabrina, and the end of a rewarding trip to a stunning locale.

## **Mt. Keith and Junction Peak**

**August 28 - 31, 2010**

**By Matthew Blum**



*Junction peak*

We were headed out to the Eastern Sierra for a trip out to Center Basin, a remote area in the eastern part of Kings Canyon national park. We had 4 people (Jesper Schou our leader, Dara Hazeghi and his dad Sassan, and me). I headed up with Dara and Sassan and after a long drive (over 7 hours) and made it to the Onion Valley campground. Jesper was coming back after a 2 week road trip out to CO and met us independently the next morning at the trailhead.

Saturday morning at 8:00, we were all geared up and ready to go. We had a 13 mile approach hike just to get out to Center Basin where we planned to climb Mt Keith and Mt Bradley. We followed the trail up over the Kearsarge pass at 11,800 feet under beautiful sunny skies, passing a set of beautiful tiered alpine lakes including Heart Lake and Pothole Lake. Just over the pass were the Kearsarge Lakes and Bullfrog Lake.

A Pacific storm was just starting to pass to the north of us, giving us delicate strands of lenticular clouds over the high peaks behind Bullfrog Lake. The wind picked up and the temperature dropped a bit, but we were treated to some of the finest scenery in all the Sierra. One of the weather reports called for snow above 9000 ft (we'd be camping a ways above that), so we hoped for the best.

We met the JMT and took it south across Vidette meadows, crossing a few small creeks and took it up to the turn-off toward Center Basin. The turn-off is at about 10,500 feet just opposite to some nice campsites. We saw our trail on the left, marked by blue and gold ribbons around adjacent trees.

The trail we followed was actually the old JMT (before the "new" one over Forester pass was completed in the 1930's). We passed a bunch of tents from a trail crew – we didn't see anyone working though. Reaching Golden Bear Lake around 4:00, we set up our camp nestled in some scraggly trees right at the edge of timberline around 11,200 feet. Total for the day was 13 miles, 4300 feet of climbing, 2300 feet descending.

The sky was now nearly completely overcast, low clouds obscuring many of the peaks. After dinner I just wanted to curl up in my sleeping bag, but after about 15 minutes, I heard a "Wow" from Jesper when he looked outside and saw a beautiful sunset and alpenglow over the summits all around. Feeling much better after warming up and eating, I ran outside to enjoy the show. Even though Jesper and I just had basic point & shoot cameras, Dara and Sassan both had fancy SLR's which they lugged for 13 miles!



*Sunset colors from near our camp at Golden Bear Lake*

After sunset, the wind got completely calm and the storm broke, giving sunny skies to the west and a brilliant red sunset. The worst of the storm passed to the north, and we just got some clouds and wind - no snow or ice to contend with the next morning - whew!

Sunday morning dawned mostly clear with just a few strands of low clouds passing below the peaks. It was quite cold in the morning with ice crystals on the tent and bear cans.

After oatmeal and hot tea for breakfast, we set out for Mt Keith - a few more miles up Center Basin. We followed the old JMT for about a mile south before heading off trail up some scree / talus slopes to a hanging valley above 12,000 ft. We noticed a set of streak marks from water flowing down the rock and we took a sloping path that led us to some nice ledges just above the streaks. From there it was a fairly straightforward climb up the talus to the Sierra Crest, where a right turn along the crest took us to the summit.

The skies remained mostly clear with a few clouds passing to the north. A fire in Cedar Grove obscured some of the views to the north, but the view south was crystal clear. We had smelled smoke the previous day from along the trail and were a little worried that the views might be smoky and the air quality would be poor. But the winds from the passing storm worked to our advantage, scrubbing most of the sky clear to the south. We had a fine view of the Williamson Bowl, the Kaweah's, Mt Tyndall and the highest of them all - Mt Whitney. We celebrated our success with chocolate and many photos. The peak is 13977 feet, just 23 feet shy of being one of the fabled 14'ers, so it had very fine views but not nearly the crowds.

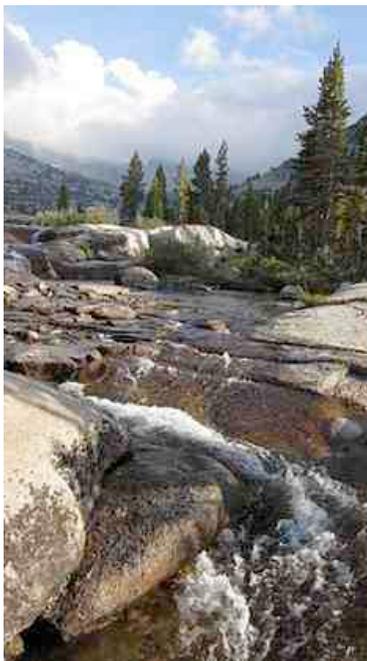


*The 4 of us on the summit – Dara, Sassan, Jesper and me*

The clouds started to build on our way down and the temperature dropped as the clouds lowered. We had planned about a 2 mile traverse to Mt Bradley to the north, but with the thickening clouds we changed our plan. Dropping down the talus slopes we took a slightly different path to the west, crossing next to beautiful granite studded alpine lake 3592m.

Continuing just past the outlet, we caught the old JMT taking us straight back to camp. We decided against Bradley since it was getting late and the traverse looked a bit longer and nastier than thought. The clouds continued to lower and as we broke down our tents, the peaks had become obscured.

We moved about 1.5 miles back to the junction with the main JMT near Bubbs creek where we found a nice site. Being 700 ft lower it was a bit warmer which I looked forward to! Total for the day was 8 miles, 2800 up, 3500 ft down. We enjoyed some fresh strawberries (thanks Dara!) to go with the Mountain house chicken noodle soup (which I enjoyed much better than the first night!).



*Bubbs Creek from next to our campsite*

The day dawned cool and clear and we were up at 5:30 to start the hike. Dara and Sassan had to be back the next day, so they didn't want to waste any time. After a quick breakfast of oatmeal and tea again, we hit the JMT heading south. We were probably the only hikers on the trail with day-packs - most people were JMT through hikers, heading from Yosemite to Mt Whitney. The 13200 ft Forester pass is quite remote, filtering out the average weekend hikers and backpackers.

Heading higher in elevation, the trees disappeared and then the shrubs and grass disappeared as well, revealing a rocky moonscape all around. Junction Peak lay right in front of us, a formidable Matterhorn shaped summit standing directly above a glacial cirque lake. It was a grueling last mile up and over the pass with the air getting thinner, but once we got the view on the far side over into Sequoia national park, we realized it was all worth it!



*View south into Sequoia national park from Forester Pass*

Sadly, this is the point at which Dara and Sassan had to turn back, so it was just me and Jesper. Thanks to some good research he did ahead of time, we had some nice beta on how to continue to the summit. From the pass, we were to head back down the switch backing JMT for about 1/4 mile until you reached a switchback with a thick metal pole in the ground, where we would then cross-country SE through the boulder strewn slopes of an intermediate peak for about 20 minutes (traversing without losing elevation), until reaching the sandy Ski Mountaineers pass at

the base of Junction Peak. We knew we had to follow a wide class 2 gully, but to get to it, we had to cross several class 3 ridges. It took a bit of doing, and thanks to Jesper's eagle eyes spotting cairns along the way, we found a gully that would take us to the top. Above the rocky and sandy gully, the climbing turned to more class 3 slabs.



*Jesper at Ski Mountaineers Pass – Junction Peak is on the right*

It was a deep, glacier polished and fairly clean granite gully at this point, giving some decent sustained class 3 climbing. The route was rather exposed and a bit scarier than I had expected, and we hadn't seen a cairn in a while. But we inched our way up the lofty granite ledges, revealing grander views all around!

Just around the corner we finally saw a cairn again - yay! We knew we should be able to make it even it was slow and steady. With just a small cut on my finger and a bump on Jesper's head on an overhanging rock, we made it up to the top rather unscathed. Crossing a final set of ledges and traversing to a ramp leading to the summit ridge, we soon found the glittering metal canister of the summit register! It had been just over an hour since we were at Ski Mountaineers pass 600 feet below.

We celebrated with Lindt Swiss chocolate as we took turns with the binoculars and the map of Sequoia / Kings Canyon parks to see how many peaks and lakes we could identify. I don't know if I've ever seen so many lakes from one place! The smoke from the Cedar Grove fire had dissipated, giving us views to the north of the Palisades, Mt Tom and

Mt. Humphreys. To the south was Tyndall, Williamson and Whitney, the Kaweahs, Milestone / Midway / Table and so many others. To the east was Mt Keith where we were yesterday. Observing closely with the binoculars we could see people walking on the summit of Whitney nearby the famous stone hut.



*Diamond Mesa and Kern River headwaters to the south*

There was not a breath of wind or cloud in the sky as we perused the register revealing names I recognized - Louise Wholey and Liza Barboza, and famous Bob Burd who is trying to dayhike all 248 SPS peaks (he just finished Kern Point on 8/26 and has just 3 to go! He may have them all done by the time you read this!) See his website at <http://www.snwburd.com/bob/index.html>.

Jesper and I had been only the 6th and 7th people to reach the summit this year - we knew we were on quite a remote and beautiful summit.

The hike back to camp was rather uneventful - we found the cairns we had missed on the way up, so we had a bit of an easier go on the way down, avoiding the sketchy class 3 ledges we climbed on our way up. We were back at the Ski Mountaineers pass in less than 40 minutes. Traversing back to the JMT, we enjoyed fine views all the way of the upper Kern River basin. Back on the JMT, it was a quick trip all on trail back to camp - we covered the roughly 4 miles in less than 2 hours. A CCC trail crew was busily re-working the trail just below Forester pass - we had to admire their hard work moving the heavy stones and even working while hanging from

ropes suspended over a cliff. We found out later they were the ones who had the tents we saw the previous day along the trail to Center Basin.



*The JMT north of Forester pass goes through this classic U-shaped glacial valley*

The next morning we were up and hiking the JMT trail past Vidette meadows, taking an informal survey of the other folks we met on the trail (many were thru-hikers going from Yosemite to Mt Whitney and we were surprised to see a numbers of females doing the trail alone – no men were alone). We took a slightly different path on the way back to Kearsarge pass (giving us stellar views over the Kearsarge and Bullfrog lakes). It was a slow and hot climb over the pass .

It was all downhill once we crossed the 11800 ft Kearsarge pass as we ambled our way back to the cars. Dara and Sassan left us a wonderful bottle of pomegranate bubbly in the bear box at the trailhead - wish they could have been there so we could all celebrate together but we did in spirit! On the way back we enjoyed a wonderful steak and salmon dinner at Jacks in Bishop and enjoyed a beautiful alpenglow sunset over the Yosemite high country before making it back to HP in Cupertino just before midnight.

It was a wonderful trip, and thanks Jesper for organizing and getting the permits - looking forward to the next trip!

Total for the trip was 45 miles and 13,400 feet of elevation - quite a distance!

Day 1 - 13 miles, 4300 ft up, 2300 down

Day 2 - 8 miles, 2800 ft up, 3500 down

Day 3 - 11 miles, 4000 ft up, 4000 down

Day 4 - 13 miles, 2300 ft up, 3600 down

## **Climbing in the Indian Himalaya**

### **Part 2 - Satopanth!**

**September, 2010**

**By Arun Mahajan**

On the first day at base camp, it was decided we would have a short acclimatization walk to see the challenge ahead and to dump some gear. Satopanth (7075m) appeared as we rounded the north-east shoulder of Vasuki Parbat (6792m), looking huge in the morning sun. The impressive summit hump, chisel headed at the top, rises over a delicate ridge which was on our route.



We could see the Indian SSB border police team climbing the snowfields to Camp II, an encouraging sight. The day was somewhat spoilt by discovery of huge areas of garbage on the glacier, left by previous expeditions in 2008 and 2009. The members of the SSB were exceedingly polite and always very friendly and every time that we passed by their BC, or ABC or even Camp-1 in the days following, they would invite us in and serve us lashings and lashings of coffee and biscuits. Also, when they found out that our leader was Martin, whom they all had heard of, there was no end to the photographs they wanted to have taken with him. As the only Indian climber in a group of British climbers, my presence as a team member of a UK climbing team also attracted curiosity and questions but that fact also helped break the ice and we were soon chatting away in Hindi.

After a rest day, where we sorted food and gear for the upper camps and (with some of the stronger ones doing a load carry to ABC) all of us moved up the mountain, across the complicated glacier, to ABC at 5180m. A snowstorm greeted us but seemed to peter off in the afternoon. The weather still looked ominous in the morning.



However, it was important to keep up our momentum and we decided to push on up the glacier to establish a higher camp. Dave, Andy and Martin set off earlier to scope out a route and the rest of us followed with the tents and sundries loading down our packs. Camp I was established on the smaller tributary glacier at 5400m/17,1716 ft. As we settled into our tents persistent snow commenced. The next day, we had a slow start due to the overnight snows. We split into two teams, mostly based on where our interests lay. The larger group headed out to scope the route from C1 to C2 and along with Andy and Alex, I set out to attempt the unnamed peak that we could see rising above C1. After roping up to over the glacier,



we got to the bottom of the climb and passed the SSB C1 but this time they were all in their tents. It was mostly a talus climb and got steeper as we went higher and after traversing a few snowfields, we finally made it to the top (5801m / 19032 ft). We saw no evidence of anybody having been on the top before us and so, convinced ourselves that we had done a first ascent!

We had fantastic views of Satopanth from this high vantage point. Our C1, almost 400m below, was visible as tiny dots. I thought that if I got the opportunity to name this peak, I would call it 'Satopanth Darshan' to mean 'the place from which Satopanth can be viewed'...a much nicer name than the prosaic, Peak 5801 as it gets named on the maps. Satopanth, in Sanskrit, means 'the path of truth / true path'. We had views of the Chaturangi glacier, the Chaturangi Peaks, Mana Peak, Chandra Parbat and looking back, the Bhagirathis, Vasuki Parbat and a few others that I could not name.



The clouds and general bad weather prevented us from getting more extensive views, however. We scooted down and by the time we got back to C1, found out that the other team had also arrived. They had a challenging day as well, trying out the hard section from C1 to C2 and setting up or fortifying the fixed ropes.

A punishingly cold morning greeted us outside the tent and some upward movement was required to stay warm. Roping up to go over the glacier towards the rock wall that would eventually lead us to the col at 6000m, our

C2, we set off in 2 teams. This time it was the entire group. We got to the bottom of the wall and traversed a snow bridge over a huge and deep bergschrund. This was a very challenging section because of the angle, the mixed nature of the climb and it was further complicated by the loads we were carrying, the cold and the altitude.



After the vertical section there was a traverse and a small snow/ice bulge to be overcome before we topped out on a short level bench. From there, we had to climb over a steep snow field and then we were at the base of a couloir that was steep but narrow and protected. Alex, Andy and I were on a rope team and the rest were much ahead. As our team topped the couloir, we were able to see the upper team skirting the side of a peaklet which was the final obstacle before the col.

At this point, I was getting very tired and it was also getting quite socked-in and snow had started to fall. We decided to call it off rather than follow the lead team to the col and to dump our load under a rock and head back (Andy and Alex were carrying food and I was carrying a 200m static line for use on a section of the ridge above C2.) We began by carefully down-climbing the couloirs, then the slope, then the traverse and finally the steep rock band above the bergschrund. I figured that the col up to which the others went towards, was just under 6000m and we were probably 200m below them. They had a very hard grind. When you see Thukpa, our

Sherpa, an Everest summitter, bent over and walking at the speed of a crawl, then you know it was hard! But they deposited almost 30kgs of food and kit at C2. It was an exhausted team returned to the tents for a well-earned meal of smash and tuna.

Another cold morning as the team descended to base camp for a rest. The pleasure of being back at base camp and Sharan's cooking was somewhat spoiled by the arrival of a forecast from the UK on our sat phone. It looked as though there would be over 200mm of rain falling as snow in the next 3 days! An 8-person Austrian team from the Naturfreunde Lenzing club arrived at base camp to attempt Satopanth after us.

The next day, Alex, Govind, Thukpa and Dhruv headed back up to Camp I in the morning with an urgent mission to clear the high camp tents, batten down the hatches and collect our high mountain boots and snow shovel before the storm closed in. They spotted a camp of an Indian trekking group bound for the Kalindi Khal a couple of kilometres up the glacier near the boulder known as Kala Patthar. The rest of the group prepared our camp for the coming onslaught, collected and burnt our rubbish and rested. The SSB Indian team departed from base camp, having wound up their attempt on the mountain. They left piles of smouldering and unburnt garbage across their base campsite. Full gas cartridges had been left in the burning pile and one of these exploded, the can flying dangerously close to Alex's head. We tried to clear the site but the task was beyond us as afternoon snowfall commenced.

On waking, the weather was surprisingly clear and a high altitude race around the lake was undertaken after breakfast. However just as the last competitor Govind came in 10 seconds short of Andy's winning time, ominous twisting cirrus clouds were chased

away by a pall of grey storm cloud and the first flakes began to fall. The snow increased in strength until we were in the grips of a heavy windless blizzard and tent-clearing operations commenced after lunch.



The snowfall continued unabated through the night and the team worked in shifts to keep the tents from collapse. Nearly a metre had accumulated by dawn and there were some tired faces in the mess tent at breakfast after a stressful night. The snow continued relentlessly through its second day, turning wetter as we dug trenches to prevent flooding as the snowpack thawed. By nightfall the storm was easing and the forecast gave hope that the snowfall would stop overnight. We woke up to clear skies and an unrecognizable base camp buried under 5ft of snow.



Martin set out on our only set of snow shoes to blaze a trail towards our equipment trapped at Camps I and II. The remainder of the group spent the day digging and organizing the kit. As the sun hit the now fragile slopes the hills

were alive with the sound of avalanches! Martin returned at 4.30pm having made 2km of progress and having dodged a large swathe of fresh avalanche debris coming off Vasuki Parbat to create a safer route down to the glacier. He scanned the main Chaturangi Glacier for signs of the Indian trekkers but could see no tents or tracks. The Indians had probably moved further up the glacier on the morning that the storm began.

The next day was spent breaking two trails, one towards our gear at Camp I (Andy, Steve G, Steve M, David, Thukpa and Dhruv) and the second (Alex, Govind and me) back down towards the valley ploughing a trail and fixing more ropes to gain the Nandanban moraine in anticipation of our porters' scheduled arrival on Friday. A good effort was made on both parts and the first dump of equipment at ABC (5180m) was reached by the uphill team who battled in furnace-like heat. The Austrians followed our trail all the way to ABC and set up a camp of their own. So far we had made 6km of pisted track, thanks to having snow shoes. Without them the trail-breaking would have been much slower or else impossible.

Now, it was the day I was dreading. My turn, along with Alex, Martin and the tireless Thukpa, Govind and Dhruv, to go to C-1. We knew that at least up to ABC, it would be a bit easier because of the tracks set earlier by Andy, the Steves, David, Thukpa and Dhruv. After that, we would be breaking trail. Leaving at 2.30am in full moonlight with Alex, Martin, Govind and Thukpa, I also headed up to ABC (followed a couple of hours later by Dhruv) and finished the trail-breaking to Camp I, arriving at 8.30am. It was surreal, walking under headlamps, over a glacier, now unrecognizable with all that new snow. Just as dawn broke, we got to ABC and past the sleeping Austrians and then the hard work of ploughing up and up and up under thick, breakable crust, plunging into the snow.....finally, Govind who had scooted off ahead, miraculously without breaking through

the crust, found a few centimetres of our marker wand still showing at Camp I. After 30 minutes digging the tent and haul bag containing 130kg of our kit were excavated. Snow depth at 5400m was almost 6 feet.



Originally, Martin was planning to stay over at C1 with Govind and Thukpa and then make a dash to C2 in the dead of night, try to locate C2 and retrieve it but looking at the situation (the route from C1 to C2 was in an avalanche path, a tough decision had to be made on the kit still left at Camp II. Snow conditions were desperately difficult with a thin crust overlying bottomless powder and there was a large swathe of avalanche debris across the route.

We also had a huge quantity of kit at Camp I – enough for 6 huge loads; so regrettably we had to abandon the Camp II mission. This disappointment aside, a superhuman effort had been made by all members and we did not return empty handed. Off course, Thukpa, Alex, Martin, Dhruv and Govind carried the heaviest of loads but I also did my bit. It was very hard trudging back to BC from C1 with those loads and then it started to snow again. The Austrians were also heading back to BC to rest and we chatted with some of them. All tiredness was washed away when we got to BC and were treated like returning heroes as if we had just done the summit...not to mention the piping hot Bhajiyas (deep fried and spicy Indian fritters) that Saran had cooked up!

Damp snowy weather in the afternoon cleared at nightfall. The absence of any sign of the Indian trekkers was leading us to suspect that they may have perished somewhere on the upper glacier. Certainly, there was now sufficient crust on the snow at 5000m to allow some movement at night, had they survived the storm.

The next day was an eventful day. While drying and sorting our kit at base, a huge section of ice cliff broke away from the summit ridge of Chaturangi Parbat and created an enormous airborne avalanche.



Even though we were a mile away on the other side of the valley we were covered in ice needles and felt the residual breeze from the blast. Govind went off down towards Gangotri to organise porters. To our surprise he returned within 2 hours with 17 who had just dropped the British Vasuki Parbat team on the other side of the glacier. With this good luck our return to Gangotri was assured, but the porters reported that the valley roads were still badly broken after the storm, so it was decided we would leave the next day to give ourselves a spare day for the return.

Three members of the Austrian team came over for coffee and brought some delicious schnapps with them. They agreed to try to recover our kit from Camp II in return for our assurance that they could use the gear to help in their own summit bid. We spent the afternoon burning rubbish and sorting gear. The weather remained splendid.

The bittersweet task of packing up base camp took up most of our morning



and we set off at about 10am down the fixed rope. The sun was strong as we made our way down to Nandanvan and this turned to a cold wind as we set off across the Gangotri Glacier moraine to Gaumukh. Large areas of side-cliff had collapsed during the storm. Much of the glacier route was unrecognisable from two weeks earlier. We arrived at Bhojbhasa as it was getting dark after a tough 14km day but we had been rewarded for our efforts with fantastic views of the Bhagirathi peaks as their granite walls glowed in the evening light.

This time, we had a few spectacular views of Shivaling as well. A truly splendid peak.

The next day, our last, was an absolutely great day. I am sure that there is some sort of irony in all this! Fantastic views of the beautiful Bhagirathi valley filled with autumn colours and grazing *bharal*.



It was a perfect day on which to end our trek out and everyone reached Gangotri in good spirits to be greeted by a freshly shaved

Govind. As we passed by Bhagirathi-1 and Bhrigu Patthar, I gazed in awe at the line Martin had done on these peaks for his first ascent on these peaks many years ago and thanked my stars that I have had the opportunity to now climb with him, two times.

The first time was in 2007 when we were successful in doing a new route (AD or D-standard) on the west face of Gangstang (6162m) and this time around. Jeeps had been organised to take us down to Uttarkashi. The road had just been reopened to small vehicles. After a tenuous passage surmounting two landslides at Sukhi (at the second blockage we witnessed a collapse of rocks which fell fortuitously so as to allow a narrow passage) the jeeps made a dash for Uttarkashi in the dark. We enjoyed some welcome beers at the resthouse and toasted our staff for their efforts in getting us back safely. The road to Rishikesh had been blocked 60km south of Uttarkashi for over a week. Our bus from Delhi was stuck on the far side.

The jeeps took us away at 10am. There was a continuous trail of destruction down the valley road. Long sections of road had been ravaged by the heavy rainfall. At the landslide bulldozers were just completing the clearance and after an hour the jeeps got through and we finally met the bus to take us to Haridwar. We arrived in the town centre close on midnight and checked into the Alpina Hotel. A day in the bustling pilgrim metropolis that is Haridwar, some shopping, temple visits and holy baths passed the time here well before we boarded the evening Shatabdi Express, taking us back to the hustle and bustle of Delhi as it prepared for the upcoming Commonwealth Games.

The last day of our adventure, spent packing, shopping and relaxing. Our agent Mr Pandey took us out for a meal in the evening in East Delhi. My flight out by American Airlines was a

bit earlier than the British Airways flight of the rest of the UK team, so I bade a fond farewell to my new friends. I suspect that after I left, sufficient beer was consumed!

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### **POSTSCRIPTS (from Martin):**

1) The Bengali trekking group (3 trekkers, guide and 4 porters) were reported overdue at Badrinath on Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>. Search helicopters were sent to scan the glacier on Sept 24<sup>th</sup> and foot parties made a brief sortie as far as Vasuki Tal. Search efforts were called off on Sept 29<sup>th</sup> and they are presumed dead. On our brief meeting with them on Sept 16<sup>th</sup> we noted that they were badly equipped with lightweight trekking boots and they were carrying only 5 litres of kerosene. We might ask ourselves if we could have done more to look for them, but without tracks it would have required a large party, all equipped with snowshoes or skis, to make any meaningful search up a 10 km stretch of glacier covered in a metre and a half of fresh snow.

2) One of the female members of the Austrian team, Gabrielle Holzer, fell during a summit attempt on Sept 29<sup>th</sup> and is presumed dead.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS (from Martin)**

1. Although the weather was exceptionally bad – the monsoon was one of the worst in living memory – a later itinerary running from mid-September to mid-October would have given a slightly better chance of settled weather. In our case we were unable to get a permit after Set 24<sup>th</sup> so had to go 10 days earlier than we would have preferred.

2. Communications equipment – GPS, Satellite Phone and short-range Walkie-Talkies – are indispensable to party safety. Without an accurate weather forecast relayed from the UK we would not have known of the coming storm on Sept 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> and could have been stranded either high on the

mountain in extreme avalanche danger or else stranded at base camp without the plastic boots and shovel that were indispensable to our survival during and after the storm. I would boldly conclude that the weather forecast saved lives in our team. The GPS was vital to locate campsites and equipment dumps buried under a metre and a half of snow. The ambiguous position of the Indian authorities on the carrying of these devices has become increasingly absurd.

3. Snow-shoes can become a vital piece of equipment after heavy snow. We would have benefited from having two or three pairs. Our medical resources and abilities were tested during Steve's accident. Even in a small team it is an excellent insurance to have a doctor. However, it is vital that large medical kits are broken down into portable modules and that these are given to several team members. Steve's accident occurred on the first day of trekking. It is vital that modules are prepared and distributed as soon as the team leaves Delhi. In the event we had "just" enough bandaging to dress Steve's wound.

**Winchell (13,775'), Agassiz (13,893'),  
Aperture (13,265'), Gendarme (13,252')**

**September 24 - 26, 2010**

**By Stephane Mouradian**

Jesper and I co-led this mini 13er bagging fest. We had a permit for 6 but nobody signed up, I guess we have to work on our trip write-up skills and make it sound better next time.

The overall plan was to approach on day 1 and set up camp in the cirque between Winchell and Agassiz. Summit both on day 2 and move camp to the base of Aperture. On day 3 carry our packs up and over Aperture, leave the packs at Jigsaw Pass and climb Gendarme and camp or head out depending.

### Day 1, Approach:

We overdid it at Jack's and did not leave Glacier lodge until 9:15am. We reached Sam Mack Meadow at 1pm but pushed on another ~1500' to the unnamed lake at 12,350' located in between Winchell and Agassiz so we could climb both peaks from there. We reached the lake at 3:30pm. While it is mostly boulders up there, we found two cleared-out sites close to the lake. The very best site had a small weather station planted right in the center, when it could have easily been placed next to it, Thanks!

Day 1 stats: 9.25mi, +4500'

### Day 2: Winchell and Agassiz.

We left the lake at 6:10am and approached the Winchell NE ridge from the North. This is a less conventional approach since most parties go around and approach Winchell from the south side. Coming from the north and facing the ridge, we stayed north (left) of the main buttress and found a short steep chute to gain the ridge below the buttress. Once on the main ridge, we ascended and stayed left of the buttress. We followed the ridge proper all the way. At some point, the ridge naturally led us into a chute and we continued up expecting that we would have to traverse left into another chute as described by Secor. We continued up all the way and reached a knife edge with the peak to our left, traversed left and gained the second chute leading to the top. In hindsight, we found that we could have avoided the knife edge and traversed left lower at some major light color rock band. We found a duck for that route on the way down.

We summited at 8:10am, so that was a 2 hour climb from our lake.

Knowing we had a long day ahead, we enjoyed summit chocolate for 10 min and headed down to go to Agassiz. We mostly took the same ridge down, stayed (climbers) left of the buttress, dropped down the chute we used to gain the ridge and then took a beeline toward Agassiz. We cutoff left and higher than Lake 12,350' and reached the

Agassiz snow field at 11am. We used the main chute from the south side, which seemed most direct; it has a prominent fan out at the bottom and it is scree. Jesper had some colorful words to describe this kind of scree... But the ordeal went by quickly as we gained the ridge and summited at 12:20pm. The register had recent entries by world famous Himalaya climbers: Conrad Anker and Peter Kroft (8/17/10), Arun Mahajan (8/15/10), Kelly Maas (?/10)...

We took a decent break in the perfect weather and started down at 1:15pm. We reached our camp at Lake 12,350' at 2:45pm. We packed up camp and started toward the foot of Aperture. We traversed east around Agassiz staying at about 12,400' to gain the drainage between Agassiz and Aperture. There are 2 ponds shown on the topo map along the route around Agassiz. Heading toward Aperture, we reached a small pass at 12,600' and set up camp at 5:30pm. This area is all boulders and moraine. We spent about 30min moving rocks in order to clear space for our small 2 man tent. Our camp was right at the pass, before a 200' drop toward to the base of Aperture.

Day 2 stats: 5.2mi, +4100'

### Day 3: Aperture, Gendarme, out.

We packed up camp and started at 6:15am. We had to drop 200' and navigated the bouldery moraine toward the SE face of Aperture. This peak is not on the SPS list; it has a one-line route description in Secor and no trip report.

We headed toward the obvious chute with a little apprehension considering we had our full packs and we were not exactly sure where the route was, if indeed there was any. The very first step in the chute was solid class 3 and not obvious, and we went to the right in the class 3 rocks and managed to go around that first step. We then followed this first chute and took one of the easy sandy ramps to the left in the direction of a second prominent

chimney-like chute high up in the rocks leading left toward the top. This second rocky chute had two chockstones halfway up. We went for it and discovered the chockstones can be easily contoured on the right, you just can't see it from the bottom. The chute broadens out afterwards and is easier. When you crest out you are close to a lower summit to the left. The real summit is to the right and, to reach it, we had to climb through a passage under some large blocks. We summited at 8:30am. This non-list summit has a Sierra club metal box. This peak is fairly popular from Bishop/Jigsaw Pass and we were #5 this year.

In order to go toward Gendarme, we had to drop down the North face to reach the drainage between Aperture and Gendarme, just east and below Jigsaw Pass. We dropped down the steep face staying right of the buttress such that we were not on the "Jigsaw side" of the buttress. Looking back it seems one might be able to negotiate the ridge if staying left of the buttress but there are some cliffy areas to negotiate and we played it safe by staying right and picking a route we could see.

Note that Jigsaw pass is the higher of the two notches in this drainage. We dropped our packs just below the pass at 10am, and took a beeline toward the summit of Gendarme across the south face, reaching what looked like the summit at 11:10am. We then spent 10 painful minutes wondering whether the next rocky gendarme on the ridge was higher, ahming and uhming about the airy ridge to get there and having to tackle that scary gendarme, until Jesper realized there was a glass jar with a register right under his foot...We were #2 on Gendarme Peak this year.

We left the summit at 11:50, picked up our packs and headed down the broad drainage toward Fifth Lake. The old trail is mostly gone and this part was slower than anticipated and filled with boulders. Staying toward the right

side of the drainage high up on the slabs helped avoid the worse parts and we actually found some ducks along that side. We had the advantage of looking down but going up this drainage could lead to slow and difficult route finding through the boulders.

We went right (south) around Fifth Lake and stayed high on the cliffs in the trees until we connected with the run out and the main trail at the Eastern edge. We finally made it to Glacier Lodge trailhead at 6:10pm.

Day 3 : ~12mi, ~+2500', -7500'

### **Lilliputian Scramble, Jerimoth Hill, 812'**

**November 7, 2010**

**By Debbie Bulger**

While back east on a family visit, Richard Stover and I decided to attempt Jerimoth Hill, the Rhode Island highpoint. Thankfully, this peak has become easier to climb in the past few years. Previously, climbers have been held at gun point by the private property owner whose land the trail traverses. The crux is crossing two-lane highway 101 at the rise of a hill. The parking spot is on the north side of the road; the peak on the south side. Use your ears; visibility is limited. It was chilly and showery, but we persevered. The autumn colors were wonderful. The 100 yards and 5 feet elevation gain passed before we knew we had started. We located the three benchmarks and ascended the summit block. Exhausted but exhilarated, we returned the way we came and headed for a cafe to warm up with a well-earned latte.



*Richard on summit block.*

## Elected Officials

### Chair

Jesper Schou / [schou@sun.stanford.edu](mailto:schou@sun.stanford.edu)  
650-725-9826

### Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler

Louise Wholey / [louisewholey@gmail.com](mailto:louisewholey@gmail.com)  
21020 Canyon View Road, Saratoga, CA  
95070  
408-867-6655

### Treasurer and Membership Roster (address changes)

Emilie Cortes / [mountaineerchica@gmail.com](mailto:mountaineerchica@gmail.com)  
415-260-3618

### Publicity Committee Positions

#### Scree Editor

Judy Molland / [screeeditor@gmail.com](mailto:screeeditor@gmail.com)

#### PCS World Wide Web Publisher

Joe Baker / [pcs@jobaker.us](mailto:pcs@jobaker.us)  
1975 Cordilleras Rd, Redwood City, CA  
94062  
650-261-1488

Scree is the monthly newsletter of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter. Current and back issues are posted on the web in PDF and HTML.

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#### PCS Announcement Listserv

If you join the PCS Announcement Listserv you will receive announcements and updates of trips and meetings. Use the <http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?A0=LOMAP-PCS-ANNOUNCE&X=&Y=> web page.

#### 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: Climbing using hands for balance.

Class 3: Climbing requires the use of hands, maybe a rope.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Trips may also be rated by level of exertion: easy, moderate, strenuous, or extreme.

**Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Thursday, December 30. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.**