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General Meeting

Date **October 9, 2012**

Time **7:30 pm – 9:30 pm**

Where **PCC
3921 E. Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA**

Program **The Road to the
Bugaboos**

Presenter **Vitaliy Musiyenkio**

From the beginning of 2010, I have been addicted to hiking and climbing around our beautiful range - the Sierra Nevada. Along the way I was able to explore a few other parts of North America and complete one of my dream climbs - 'Beckey-Chouinard' on South Howser Tower (TD+ V, 5.10+).

During the slide show I would like to share my passion for climbing peaks, taking photos, and testing my own limits.



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 and enter in the back of the building.

Google <http://tinyurl.com/28ng>

Editor's Notes

We have a very diverse set of trip reports this month, and also a cautionary tale on hypothermia from Greg Johnson. Please take note! Plus: there are currently very few trips listed, so join us at the Trip Planning meeting on October 16, so we can fill up that schedule!
Judy

Chair Column

Last month we dealt with steep stuff south-of-the-border (thanks, Emilie!), and our next monthly meeting will feature Vitaliy Musiyenko's show on spectacular climbing to the north in the Canadian Bugaboos.

It's time to start thinking of winter (and spring) trips, so bring your ideas to the Fall Trip-Planning Meeting. It will be run by Terry on Tuesday October 16 at the same place as last spring -- my house at 3489 Cowper St. in Palo Alto. Feel free to send suggestions in advance to Vice-Chair & Trip-Scheduler Terry Cline.

Time is running out for assembling a nominating committee to prepare the November PCS elections for the 2013 officers. Please contact me -- (650) 493-2378 or rodmccalley@sbcglobal.net -- if you're interested, either in being on the committee, or being an officer.
Rod McCalley

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>

Late September - Early October
South Warner Wilderness Loop
Leader: Tim Hult

October 6 - 7 - Mt. Tom and Mt. Basin
Leader: Lisa Barboza

November 3 - 4 - Kern Peak
Leader: Lisa Barboza

PCS Trip Details

South Warner Wilderness Loop

Goal: Circumnavigate Warner Mtn Range
Location: NE California, about 20 miles from Alturas
Dates: End September/Beginning October
Leader: Tim Hult
Difficulty: Class 1 and 2

South Warner Wilderness Loop "Late September - Early October"
Objective of this 3- 4 day, 40 mile loop trip will be to circumnavigate the Warner Mountain Range in NE CA, about 20+ miles from Alturas. Leader is seeking partners interested in exploring dates for this trip and to discuss logistics. The loop trip begins and ends at Peppertine trailhead with all travel except optional peaks on class 1 trail (Summit trail to Owl Creek Trail). Potential class 2 Peaks: Eagle Peak (9892 ft), Warrent Peak (9710 ft). contact: timdhult@sbcglobal.net for a discussion of this trip, planning and timing.

Mt. Tom (13,652') and Mt. Basin (13,181')

Goal: Mts. Tom and Basin
Location: Bishop, Eastside of the Sierras
Dates: October 6 - 7
Leader: Lisa Barboza
Difficulty: Class 2

Join us for a fall climb of Mts. Tom and Basin just outside of Bishop. These peaks dominate the surrounding area and provide a fantastic view of Mt. Humphreys, the Desolation Basin, Piute Crags, and the White Mountains.

Saturday: We will be using a 4WD to get to the trailhead. Hike in 3.7 miles, 2000 gain, to camp at Horton Lake. Climb Basin Peak (13,181'), 1.6 miles, 3000 feet. Enjoy Happy Hour in camp at Horton Lake (9,900').

Sunday: Climb Mt. Tom (13652), 3.7 miles, 3500 feet. Enjoy views from the summit. Back to camp, hike out and drive home.

Participants must be in good physical condition with intermediate skills. The peaks are CLASS 2 Terrain, with some loose rock and possible tricky footing. Bear Canisters are required. For more information, and to join the trip, please contact Lisa Barboza (lisa.barbozaATgmail.com). Co-leader needed.

Kern Peak

Goal: Kern Peak (11,510')
Location: Kennedy Meadows, Southern Sierra
Dates: November 3 - 4
Leader: Lisa Barboza
Difficulty: Class 1

Join us for this fun beginner climb of Kern Peak in the Southern Sierra. Visit the other Kennedy Meadow, off of Hwy 14 north of Mohave. This area has surprisingly warm days in November owing to the southern latitude. Daytime is pleasant, nighttime can dip into the low 40s. It is a great time of year to hike.

Start Saturday morning, November 3rd at the BlackRock Trailhead (8900 feet) out of Kennedy Meadow in the Southern Sierra. Hike in 8 miles, 2000 gain, to camp in RedRocks Meadows (8700 feet) near springs Enjoy Happy Hour.

Sunday morning, November 4th, climb Kern peak (11,510'), 4.25 miles, 2800 gain. Enjoy beautiful views, hike back to camp and hike out.

Qualifications. Much of this climb is on trail, all but the last 2.5 miles to the peak. The peak itself is rated as Class 1, meaning easy ground to cover to the peak itself. Participants must be in good physical condition, have hiking and backpacking abilities.

For more details, please contact lisa.barbozaATgmail.com

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.

Telescope Peak

Goals: Telescope Peak
Location: Death Valley
Date: November 10
Leader: George van Gorden
Difficulty: Class 1

The walk is along a high ridge overlooking Death Valley over 11000 feet below. It is a beautiful walk that just fits into a late fall day. The weather should be cool or even cold while just below in the valley it is probably in the 80's. The hike is 14 miles roundtrip. The last 2 miles to the trailhead take four wheel drive but we can always ferry people. The Friday before the hike is a holiday for many people. Camp at trailhead or at motel in Ridgecrest less than two hours away. Location - West of Death Valley at 11000 ft. Class 1 a good trail Leader George Van Gorden - gvangorden@gmail.com

Trip Reports

**Red and Red and White and White
June 18, 2011 and August 19, 2012**

**By Aaron Schuman
Photos by Greg Johnson**

Our trip to Red and White Mountain began June 18, 2011, and completed on August 19, 2012, with a cycle of seasons and a rotation of personnel in between.

In 2011, we started with Greg Johnson, Joe Baker, Kathy Kohberger, Ted Lenzie, Frank Martin, Leigh Yi, and myself. In 2012, Greg and I returned to the mountain, with Noreen Ford and Rose Tomey.

We started up at McGee Creek trailhead (8100), about ten miles south of Mammoth Lakes. In 2011, we were in continuous snow cover by 9000 feet, but in 2012, we hiked on dry trail all the way to camp and saw only patchy snow in shaded gullies up high. In 2011, we made our first crossing of the rushing creek on a fragile snow bridge, but in 2012, we saw that the place where the snow bridge had been before, a collapsed log bridge remained.



Creek Crossing

As we advanced up the creek, we came upon a beaver lodge, home to a healthy family of aquatic tree gnawing rodents, thriving in both seasons. In 2011, we couldn't find the second creek crossing, and instead picked our way through avalanche debris, but in 2012, the second crossing was obvious and the trail crew had cleared a path through the rubble.

We camped in view of Big McGee Lake (10800) both years, but in 2011 we found a rocky outcrop that was blown free of snow, far from the lake, and in 2012 we settled into four little bivy spots on steep slope right above the south shore.



Approach

On both attempts, we climbed the easy face from Little McGee Lake to the northeast ridge, and followed that ridge toward the summit. In 2011, we stamped up deep but soft snow. I stepped onto a place where the snow wasn't supported by underlying rock, and fell into a moat deeper than I am tall. In 2012, we were on talus all the way.



Traveling Surface

The class 2 ridge walk was strikingly similar on the two attempts, because in 2011, the windy ridge was blown free of snow, and in 2012, it was dry everywhere. On the 2012 attempt, Rose was uncomfortable with the looseness of the scree and the exposure to a long slide, and chose to wait on the ridge while the others approached the peak.

Both years, we reached the notch below the summit around noon. In 2011, we looked up at the steep snow, and admitting that we lacked the ice axes we needed to continue, turned away. In 2012, we clambered right up the rock, mostly class 2 with a few class 3 moves, and quickly attained the summit (12850). We found a summit register that consisted only of a single sheet of paper in a plastic mayonnaise jar. We added one more page. This register won't survive long unless somebody improves upon it.



Summit View

In 2011, the trip was scheduled in a two-day weekend. We returned to the lake, broke camp, hiked out to the cars, and drove home, arriving around 3:00 a.m. In 2012, we gave Red and White Mountain the extra day it deserves, and we only needed to make it back to camp on Saturday afternoon.

But in 2012, we still had trouble with the return trip. Just as we started down from the ridge, the cloudy sky erupted in rain and hail. Water rushed over the slabs that were dry on our ascent, making our footing was unsure. Even though we all wore our foul weather gear, this much rain was too much, and our clothes got wet underneath. We were all damp and chilly when we returned to camp. I didn't realize until Sunday morning that Greg was on the edge of hypothermia.

Greg Johnson's Account of Being On The Edge Of Hypothermia

"I nearly went hypothermic. Something you don't want to do in the mountains. We got hailed and rained on coming down from Red and White Mountain. I thought it would be a short storm so I didn't stop to put on my waterproof pants. Note to self, stop and put on rain pants no matter what. Lesson learned. I didn't bring a pack cover because I carry a couple of garbage bags as a lighter alternative to the traditional nylon pack cover. The logic is to put everything in the pack in garbage bags to keep them dry instead of trying to keep them dry by keeping the pack dry. Who wants to stop and repack their backpack in the middle of a rainstorm? A pack cover can be quickly deployed. Lesson learned. My ultra light water resistant jacket is not waterproof so my undergarments got wet. Since there was a 20-30% chance of thunderstorms I should have brought the GORE-TEX jacket. Lesson learned.

By the time we got back to camp, I was soaked, and everything in my backpack, including my down jacket, was soaked. Maybe when there is a 20-30% chance of thundershowers I should bring fleece instead of or along with the down jacket. Lesson learned.

My tarp-tent had a small pool of water in the bottom by the time I got back to camp because I didn't stake it out correctly due to the space I was working with. I emptied the water out of the tent and with some creative staking and the use of some rocks managed to prevent any more water from getting inside. Lesson learned. My down sleeping bag did manage to stay dry because it was on top of the sleeping pads as were some long underwear pants and a pair of wool socks. My sleeping bag is summer weight and usually is warm enough. This night was going to be questionable. The idea is I carry a down jacket so I can wear or layer it in when it gets cold and I can stick the foot of the sleeping bag into my backpack for extra insulation when needed. With a wet jacket and wet backpack that wasn't possible. Lesson learned.

By 5 p.m. it had stopped raining and I was crawling into my tent. I put my pack in one of the garbage bags and my wet clothing into the other garbage bag. I even hung up my jackets hoping they might be partially dry by morning. I put my dry clothes on which got wet because I was wet. I kept my other wet undergarments on because the t-shirt was wool and the pullover was polyester and both would still provide warmth and probably dry out on my body by morning. My wool cap which was in my pack was surprisingly dry so I put it on and crawled into my sleeping bag which was now becoming wet.

At this point a little shivering began because I was cooling down from my hike and the frantic effort to waterproof my tent. I managed to keep warm enough to nap for about an hour but was still chilled when I woke up. I had some food and water left over from my hike so I didn't try to cook up a hot meal for dinner or pump water since I didn't have anything to keep me warm outside the tent. As I hibernated in my tent I began to warm up and dry out. By the time I went to sleep I was warm except my feet. I figured they would eventually warm up. I was even offered a hot bottle of water but I declined. What can I say? I have paranoia of the bottle leaking in the bottom of my sleeping bag. My original thesis was proved correct later when I got up in the middle of the night to relieve myself and found my feet toasty warm.

By morning I was dry in my sleeping bag. My down jacket that I had hung up in the tent was dry enough to keep me warm while I enjoyed a hot breakfast and packed my gear. I hiked out in my long underpants and rain pants. It was overcast and cool. Thankfully so or I would have been hiking out in my long underwear. After climbing something like 60 SPS peaks over 15 summers this was the first trip I've actually gotten caught in a real sustained rainstorm. So I managed to survive and learn a few lessons only to be taken down by a stomach bug a week later but that's another story and maybe one not unrelated to the story of Red and White Mountain..."

Mount Langley
August 27 - 28
By George Van Gorden

An ascent, perhaps not of great consequence, but then not many are, of Mt Langley (a little over 14000 feet) on the days of August 27 and 28, was made by our party, led from the rear in the best aging mountaineer style by George Van Gorden, author of this report. The other members were David Dailor, Roy Johnston, Dara Hazeghi, and Sassan Hazeghi.

Our trip was to be a party of five, although we started out as a party of three. Dave, Roy and I all came in one car. We spent Sunday night in Ridgecrest and were to meet Hazeghi, father and son, at the Cottonwood Lakes trailhead at 11 am. We waited until 11:30 and at that time decided after much deliberation that their car must have broken down and they would not be coming. The car breaking down was exactly what did happen, but then that's another story. The three of us started out.

We moved at a good pace established by Dave. We were headed for Lake 5, a walk of about six miles with a thousand foot elevation gain. We reached the lake by 2:30 and established our camp amid a forest of boulders. Dave who had a little more energy than Roy and I decided to take off for Cirque Peak swearing to be back by 6:30 which, in spite of worry on my part, he was. Our camp was not visible from the trail and so a little after six Roy and I walked out to the trail looking for Dave but it wasn't Dave that we saw coming down the trail, but rather Dara and Sassan. Their car had broken down and had ended up in Groveland where it was undergoing BMW surgery. Sassan had rented a car and, though a bit late and many travails of travel later, he and Dara were with us now. We all gave thanks for our reunion, even Dave, who by now was with us also after having summited Cirque.

We started out at 7:30 the following morning. We were going to use the Old Army

pass trail, which though not maintained, presented no problems. If there had been more snow then it would have been a different situation. It took us about one hour to reach the pass after a gain of one thousand feet. We headed north toward Langley. We had a couple of miles to go and 2000 feet. When we came in sight of the summit ridge, we had to decide what appeared to be the best way up onto the ridge.

Our decision was to move a little to the right and then head directly onto the ridge. It took a little scrambling and a heroic battle with the wind. We were on the summit a little after 10:30 and while the others had a photo fest I hunkered down out of the wind. We followed the same route on the return and below the pass we were out of the wind. We were all back at the cars by a little after five where we drank pomegranate juice supplied by Dara and Sassan before driving off into the sunset.

Dragon Peak
September 1 - 2
By Linda Sun

Dragon seems popular with the PCS this year, so I decided to join the choir as well. On Saturday Harry and I started at Onion Valley trailhead just before 11am. The trail branches after a few hundred yards, and we turned right onto the Golden Trout Lakes trail. It passes a waterfall on the right, and then stayed mostly left of the creek. We boulder-hopped one section just before the meadow, then discovered on the way down that the actual trail is on the opposite of the creek (north side).

At the meadow, the trail branches again; the left fork goes to Golden Trout Lakes, but we went right and up, and camped at the east side of the lower of the two unnamed lakes. We got to our camp around 2pm. Harry was tired and I was lazy; neither of us wanted to go up the Loose Lily pass to get to Kearsarge, so we took a long nap.



Sunday we started hiking around 730am. Thanks to all the trip reports, we followed the broad talus slope, then the narrow sandy chute to the right at the end of the talus fan. We found the chockstone, and tunneled under it with ease (Thanks Aaron!). Another twenty yards of scrambling brought us up to the ridge. We scrambled first on the left (west) side, and when that cliffed out, we scrambled up and over a gendarme. Then we went up the right (east) side of the ridge. Here I made a mistake and actually went up the false summit.

Instead the correct way is to go left again aiming for the notch between the false summit and a gendarme. From the notch, class 3 scrambling gets you to the famous boot traverse. I brought a 30m rope, a set of cams from .5 to .2, and a few stoppers.



Harry took a look at the traverse, and told me that he was comfortable rope free.

So we went over the traverse and climbed to the top. Harry's first class 4 peak! We got to the top just before 11am, lingered for a while, and came back to camp around 1:30pm. Harry felt strong, so we hiked out, which only took 1.5 hours, and got home around 11:30pm. Great holiday weekend, and escaped the traffic as well.

Bella Italia, Even When It Rains (Climbing Peaks Around Lake Italy)

September 2 - 8

By Sonja Dietrich

Doing an east-west traverse of the Sierra over the top of Stanford N, I had seen the towering peaks over the Mono Recesses and dreamed of climbing them. Finally, the opportunity came and my friend Larry Jang and I started out at Pine Creek trailhead toward Italy Pass for a week. Spectacular climbing weather turned into significant atmospheric instabilities, which forced us to adapt our ambitious climbing plans. More details are in my blog at <http://deserttortoise.wordpress.com>; below is the executive summary for the climbing parts.

By noon on our 2nd hiking day, we had hauled our still food-filled packs to the crest of Italy Pass at 12,400 ft. Larry had some altitude issues, so I left him, the packs, the SPOT and my binoculars behind and set off to visit the Emperor Himself, Julius Caesar, via the south ridge from Italy Pass. For the most part, there are sandy ledges making up a use trail for the various alpine-dwelling mammals. The talus is made up of nice granite: solidly stacked and not prone to kicking down rocks should a multi-climber party ascend. I reached a small saddle near the top where multiple routes converge. From there, I found the summit block to be easy, non-exposed 3rd class.



The author on Julius Caesar

I easily located the summit register, signed, and left some Trader Joe Ginger Chews for the next climbers. I also took a look at the West Ridge, which in Secor 3rd edition is called a classic class 3 climb. No kidding. I thought David Harris' report to be a bit exaggerated at first (<http://Climber.Org/reports/1999/455.html>). On seeing this ridge I have to agree with him that it is definitely not class 3, or I am a way better climber than I make myself believe! It looked like a solid class 2 to me. After studying the route up Mt Gabb, I returned to Italy Pass about 2.5 hours after I started. Not bad for a 2nd day at altitude. We got to our camp on the south side of Lake Italy near the inlet near 6pm. There are several nice campsites there, some of them with rock walls stacked up on the west side of the camps to protect from the strong updraft winds coming through the valley most evenings.

On the 3rd day, my body demanded a rest day, so I chucked my plans for Recess. Wise decision, because around our estimated summit time a fast-moving, intense hailstorm moved over Lake Italy. But at least Larry got some fishing time in and procured three sizeable trout from Lake Italy for dinner.

Day 4 saw us get up at 5:30 am for a 6:30 am start to climb Mt Gabb. We hiked along the north shore of Lake Italy until we came to the second creek just across from our camp.

Two connecting ramps of willows led us up to the ledge at 11,800 feet connecting Hilgard and Gabb. We used that ledge to traverse below the cliffs to reach the south face of Gabb. Immediately after bypassing the ridge, one should make a left turn to reach the sandy bowl. I let myself be pushed too far east by the granite ledges, which required a traverse to the west to reach the sandy bowl once we got to the base of the south face.

By 10:07 am, we had reached the saddle at 13,000 feet and the clouds were gathering. I looked at the 700 feet of ridge above me, the weather, and decided to make a run for it. Secor calls the south slope and SW ridge class 2-3. The face is certainly class 2 most of the way, with some easy class 3. Except for the first 150 feet, I found the ridge to be class 3 due to the size of the granite blocks.



Larry Jang on the SE ridge of Mt. Gabb

It is not exposed at all and quite a lot of fun to climb, but definitely more challenging than the south ridge of Caesar. On the few occasions when I used short sandy ledges, strong whiffs of sheep dung confirmed the presence of bighorn in the area. I swear they were somewhere out there, our climbing efforts providing the sheep equivalent of the Comedy Channel.

We got to the peak at around 11:45 am. A quick scout revealed no sign of a summit register. We sadly could not spend much time

enjoying the superb view, because being on the highest peak for several miles around with rapidly building cumulonimbus clouds just had "lightning rod" written all over it. We climbed down very quickly, this time taking the creek all the way to Toe Lake.



The author enjoying Toe Lake

I spent a good 20 minutes enjoying the ice-cold water of the lake, which felt so good. Meanwhile, there was almost complete cloud cover, the occasional drizzle at our altitude, rain socking in Gabb, and distant rolls of thunder once or twice. After a leisurely hike back along the north shore, we got back to camp at 4:15 pm for a total of 10 hours round-trip.



View of Lake Italy from Mt. Gabb

The next day I wanted to climb Hilgard, but when I poked my head out of the tent at 5:30, I saw the sky covered in altocumulus clouds, a

sure sign of bad weather rolling in. We did not have it in us to outrun another set of storms on a 2100 feet climb, so we strategized and decided a hike toward the Bear Lakes Basin was called for. We only got around Brown Bear and Teddy Bear Lake before we decided to return for an afternoon nap in the tent just barely beating the rain getting to us. We were entertained for a few hours by the various drumming patterns of steady rain interspersed with hail.

Day 6, the weather finally turned better again and we started out at 7 am toward the round willow patch marking the Italy outlet route up Hilgard. Atop this first gully, we stayed on the SE ridge until it got too blocky, which was a little higher than halfway up the climb. From the ridge, we easily moved into the SE face. The gully is sandy and somewhat loose, which is not my favorite climbing material but this one was not too bad. The climb is very straightforward: the broad chute narrows to a gully, and staying on the lowest slope naturally turns the climber toward and into the small chute Secor mentions leading through the left of the head wall.

Just when we were about 200 feet below the summit, a small single-engine plane flew a few hundred feet above the summit. The top of the chute revealed a feature which caused me to laugh out loud. Reaching the summit at 10:15 am, we enjoyed a generous 30 minutes there with stunning views across the High Sierra. Again, I could not locate a register, but found 3USGS markers. The glissading on the down climb was ok, not quite as nice as on Gabb but acceptable. Forewarned by Debbie Bulger's trip report

(<http://Climber.Org/reports/2007/1603.html>) we did not glissade all the way down to the tarn but headed for a small patch of dry meadow at the bottom of the chute. Walking a few hundred yards south from this grassy patch on top of a broad ridge got us to the wide ramp leading back to the round willow patch signaling the descent route to the Lake Italy Inlet. Being back at camp at 1 pm, Larry

found time to catch two more trout as appetizers before losing the lure to the rocky depths of the Lake.

We hiked out the next day in one shot, chased by thunderstorms and rain. Coming down from Italy pass we met Bob (Emerick, SPS list finisher in 1989), Anne, and their 3 gorgeous dogs. Originally, we had planned to camp at Pine Lake but two lightning strikes within less than a mile away and almost steady rain for several hours made me decide a very late arrival in my soft bed was worth the extra effort.

Red Kaweah (13,720'+)

September 14 - 19

By Rod McCalley

My son Roddy had about a week free in mid-September (after completing a 19-day guiding job on the JMT for Southern Yosemite Mountain Guides). So we headed for a region of the Sierra neither of us had been to before: the Kaweahs, approached from Mineral King.

After doing a car-camp at Cold Spring Campground near road-end, and getting a permit at the nearby Ranger Station, we headed up the Sawtooth Pass Trail. Hot sun inclined us to stay on the main trail switchbacks (in forest shade) all the way to Monarch Lake, above which we eventually branched left to Glacier Pass (3250' up). Its far side does have an old engineered trail down the steep rocks on the right for several hundred feet, after which the scree & use-trail descent to Spring Lake is easy. Since the area was pretty crowded, we found a great campsite about 1/4 mile down the outlet stream.

Next day, after a short traverse to the Blackrock Pass Trail, and up about 2000', we backpacked down through Little Five Lakes Basin to 9500' in Big Arroyo. Using our map, Roddy found an excellent campsite up the other side at about 10,900', on a creek about

1/4 mile SE of the main stream coming down from Red Kaweah's southwest basin. This great forested platform served us well for two nights.

Next morning, it was a pleasant hike to Lake 11795 in the SW basin, from which a rising traverse well above the east shore avoided the loose scree directly north of that lake.

After angling right into the upper gullies, we chose to climb up the solid larger rocks on the right side of the rise between the two main gullies, cresting at the very narrow ridge overlooking the vertical NE face. The ridge itself (to the right of a ramp described in some reports) went very well (some low class 3), and we summited Red Kaweah by about 1:15! The classic registers are now gone, with just a small tablet from last September, and a brand new SPS register placed in the box this July by a group including Daryn Dodge. We were the 4th party there this year.



Black and Red Kaweah, as our descent approaches high camp

On our descent we chatted with a young, fast climber (Chad ... from San Ramon), who had already done Black Kaweah this morning, after a single-day backpack in from Mineral King! I arrived in camp pretty beat, having come closer to my physical limits (+9300' in 3 days) than I've done in quite a while. This part of the Sierra is so varied and interesting that we wanted to go a different way out.

After a quick descent into Big Arroyo, and climb back up to Little Five Lakes, we branched left around to Big Five Lakes Basin and camped at the inlet to Lake 10190. From there it was an easy stroll up to Hands & Knees Pass, followed by a rocky scramble down to the left. We chose to continue left to Cyclamen Lake, rather than go down to Spring Lake for a redo of Glacier Pass. The route to Columbine Lake from Cyclamen is a little tricky, and not well discussed in Secor -- best is to climb directly east, and only then turn right for a horizontal traverse to Columbine just below the headwall, where the large rocks provide a good way to avoid steep slabs. On up to Sawtooth Pass and down the awful sandy "trail" on its west side, to camp at Monarch Lake (along with 7 others finishing clockwise loops that started through Timber Gap). A simple Day-6 backpack put us at the cars before noon.

Joining the PCS is easy. Go to <http://www.peakclimbing.org/join>

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 Wednesday, October 24. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.