



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

June 1985

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JUNE MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, June 19th at 7:30 p.m. in the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle St., Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, Karl Swanson will present a slide show of climbs he did in Africa.

MINUTES FOR THE MAY MEETING

The minutes for May were not available at press time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hatcher Pass Presentation

A representative of the Alaska Division of Natural Resources will try to attend the June MCA meeting to discuss development of the Hatcher Pass Management Plan. Virtually every MCA member at the May meeting acknowledged at least periodic use of Hatcher Pass for recreation. The June meeting will provide an opportunity for members to present their concerns and desires for the area.

Hatcher Pass is perhaps the best quiet sport area in Southcentral. It offers opportunities for hiking, Nordic skiing, mountaineering and rock climbing.

Options for the region include increased mining opportunities, expansion of Independence Mine State Park, road development, a downhill ski area and maintenance of the status quo. What finally is done will depend upon which interest groups speak loudest -- DNR does not have the budget to conduct a comprehensive survey of users. Please come to the meeting prepared to express your concerns and ideas.

Annual MCA Picnic

The Annual Mountaineering Club Picnic will be held on Saturday, August 17th, at Eklutna Lake, Campground "A". Look for the MCA arrows, which will point you in the right direction of the campground.

Hamburgers and hot dogs with appropriate condiments and soda waters will be provided by the club. Please bring chips, pickles, salads, desserts, beer, or whatever else to round out the menu. Cooking will start between 1:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Also, there will be volleyball to inspire the competitive nature in those attending. Frisbees and hacky sacks are also welcome.

If anyone would like to help with set up, shopping for the food, etc., please contact Nan DeGood or Bernie Helms. Phone numbers on the back page.

Bernie H.

1985 Iditfoot

The 1985 Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Classic (Iditfoot) wilderness footrace will start August 1st. Previously run between Hope and Homer, this year's race will be from Mentasta Lake, 200 miles west to the McKinley Park Hotel and should take 5 to 14 days. Interested persons can receive a race packet with complete info and entry forms by writing:

Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Classic
Mentasta to McKinley
Box 81936
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Please enclose \$1.00 to cover printing and postage.

Race organizers are also in need of checkpoint volunteers, including some with glacier travel experience. Transportation or compensation for travel into the bush will be provided. For more info write the above address and include your phone number.

Tim Gillis
(Anchorage) 278-3725

Arctic Wildlife Refuge Trip

Wendy Block and Stuart Ollanik are looking for someone familiar with the Arctic Wildlife Refuge or the Brooks Range to accompany them on a two week backpacking trip in late July and early August. Wendy and Stuart would be happy to make the arrangements if you'll contribute your knowledge of the area. For details call Wendy at 278-1402 or Stuart at 274-5147.

TRIP REPORTS

Rainbow Peak
May 11, 1985

Nine of us showed up, of which four were signed up and five were surprises (four who had signed up didn't show -- please guys, this can be frustrating to the leader on more extensive trips).

The weather was so-so and stayed that way, but no rain. Gene Klymko, the leader, saw us off, but had to return early, leaving Jim Pommert in charge. We went up the second ridge, on the northerly side of the little creek flowing from the peak -- a route that is easier going and avoids the long scree slope traverse we thought might have snow (when fog lifted we saw it did not). We had a couple hundred yards of rock and snow crest before the last, snowy approach -- but in general there was less old snow and a little more new snow than last year. A cold wind shortened our lunch break and we returned via the scree slope and regular route.

We spent about 6 easy hours on the trip, climbing a little under 3400 feet and avoided snow all the way to the upper ridge. Besides Jim and myself were Bert Sivert, Mark Findlay, Wendy Block, Stuart Ollanik, Curvin Metzler and Bob Mullaney.

Bill Wakeland

McHugh Peak
May 19, 1985

Seven people showed up at the parking lot despite the windy overcast morning. Rain turned to snow as we started to the trailhead from the McHugh Cr. Wayside parking lot. Twenty minutes up the trail it looked for sure the sun would be out to stay, but the weather played games with us all day. At tree line we stopped for a break and watched a cow moose and calf, no more than a week old.

From here the trail goes up the large open bowl to a saddle on the ridge. We followed the ridge east to a high point then across an open flat section. Bruce Silva and I decided to turn around at this point, Jim Pommert and the others traversed across the slope and then up to the summit.

The round trip took 7 hours. Besides Bruce, Jim and myself were Rob Schwebel, Ray Distasio, Michael Reese, and Aaron Wester.

Mark Findlay

To Climb a Bonafied Peak

It was February 23 and the glacier was called Russell. It oozed down the 8000-foot north face of Mt. Bona in the eastern Wrangells and wandered down to the White River. Two planes and a host of cavorting figures littered the white snow of the glacier. One plane had a ski in a crevasse, a situation quickly altered by the application of group grunting. With a roar and swirl of snow, the planes soon abandoned the figures and hurtled skyward. We stood gazing at the brooding face of Bona, a dark hulking mountain capped by a luminous summit, 16,500 feet high.

We built an igloo from blocks of barely cohesive snow. A couple hours of work and it was done. But then Paul went inside. He rapidly reduced the igloo to a pile of rubble with, appropriately, himself underneath. That was igloo number one.

The next day more blocks were quarried, carried, and placed in igloo fashion. Again, we finished the structure, but Paul saw a hole. A snow block he tossed, just a small one he later claimed, and the edifice once again lay in ruins. That was igloo number two.

Undaunted, we continued. More blocks were cut and placed in a shrinking spiral. Construction went well and only two more blocks were needed. But Murphy's Law prevailed and Dave and Rich were soon buried under a pile of debris. A blue perfume of linguistic ingenuity arose from the rubble while Paul, standing well to the side, loudly proclaimed his innocence. Igloo number three.

Igloo number four, however, built with every trick we knew, stayed up and base camp was established. The next three days turned into a battle between the erosive capabilities of 60 mph winds versus our snow shoveling abilities to protect the shelter.

The storm did finally leave. We did finally begin to climb. Food and gear was carried to 9800 feet where a crevasse contained a snowbank large enough for a cave. On the descent we took a lunch break. Dave, impatient to be off, left before his rope partner was ready. Seventy-five feet of loose rope piled on the snow. Half of it followed him when he fell into the hidden crevasse. The muttering that floated up from the blue depths of the fissure indicated that the only thing Dave had hurt was his pride so, after a lengthy discussion of Dave's wants (a byte/bite/bight of rope?) we hauled him out and continued the descent.

Sunday, March 3, saw our little group crawling up the west shoulder of Mt. Bona with our crampons and ice axes; eyes set on the summit. There was no dangling from precipices or tiptoeing along cornices on Mt. Bona. Just a lot of panting, each climber striving, seemingly in vain, to inhale enough oxygen to make that next little rise. 15,800 feet high and the heavy packs were dumped in the snow. At 16,000 feet even the extra weight of the ropes felt like a burden and they were coiled and left to await our return. Paul crumpled next to the coiled ropes, his oxygen-starved body incapable of further upward effort. He, too, awaited our return.

Three of us, however, puffed, panted, staggered, and gasped onto Bona's

spaceous crest. Shouts and cheers would have reverberated had we been able to inhale enough air, but we simply looked about. A chaos of arrogant little peaks strutted off to every horizon and a dozen behemoths rose to almost 20,000 feet. No hint of civilization.

Our stay at this remote point in the -20 deg. F arctic sky was brief for the Alaskan night still comes early in March. Exhaustion pursued us, making its final tackle as we agonized into our camp. The full moon grinned at our inert bodies.

We took two days to descend in sunshine to base camp. For seven days thereafter the storms came back to extract payment for our brief stay on Bona's 16,500-foot summit. They would lash us with cyclonic fury then spill a bowl full of sunshine on our snow-filled doorway. A 35-pound pack, anchored by a picket, was blown out of camp and only careful vigilance and wild dashes into the raging white kept our gear intact. Even standing was sometimes difficult as 70 mph winds knocked us about.

Finally a plane appeared, wobbling like a drunken mosquito, its two occupants shouting, "I can't hold it!", with neither knowing whether someone was going to throw up or the plane was going to crash. They dropped a bag which contained five beers, a pepsi, a bag of Doritos, and a note saying it was impossible to land. The plane staggered away.

For a week we fought the storm and the twin demons of boredom and tedium. But Wednesday actually dawned, with partly blue skies and the promise of sun. The sun and planes arrived at the same time. For nineteen days we lived in the hall of the mountain king. For twenty minutes we sat perched on his crown. Then we left his regal court and returned to the common world.

El Rojohombre

Hesperus

First Ascent

After a long, turbulent flight of 2 hours we landed at the headwaters of Big River, just beneath Hesperus. The next day we climbed in snow with 100 meters of visibility, up the steep but solid granite face. The climbing was slow; very few protection points and we were unable to see much of the route, which we had scouted the day before. We abseiled off in mid-evening and headed back to base camp.

Our next try was to gain the ridge from base camp and follow it to the summit. Unfortunately, the ridge was a pile of loose rock with nothing to cling to, and no means of protection. Climbing on, the ridge became a series of crumbling towers of rock. To stay on the ridge each climber would put his arms on one side, hang his legs on the other, and scramble, trying not to think of all the air belw. On this route our ascent was only to 6050 feet.

We packed up base camp and moved it around Hesperus to the side of the

river one mile before the start of the Revelation Glacier. All of us caught a few Z's that afternoon, and then began our third try at 8:00 p.m., May 1st.

We began the climb by ascending up a winding snow chute topped with a pristine waterfall, 75 meters high. What a beautiful ice climb in the evening moonlight! From the waterfall, snowfields banded with rock awaited us. Onward we climbed with our energy sapping in the early morning hours before dawn. Once out of the snow an ice cap was next. I traversed up across to gain the ridge, hoping to find a bivy site. Karl and Justin climbed directly up the rope to the ridge, which seemed to be getting farther away from us. After finally reaching the ridge I was not enthused. In fact, I was disenchanted. I discovered only dropping cornices and no place for a bivy. With the sun ebbing over my shoulders I traversed across to Karl and Justin and tied in on the rope.

We climbed a few more pitches and stopped below the second glacier massif, which held the summit. At this site there was room to stand and we regenerated our bodies with nourishment. From here we ice-climbed over 10 pitches of ice (I lost count of how many) which led us to a bit of snow below the summit, weeded with menacing crevasses. Then there it was, the untouched summit of Hesperus. On the summit the view was glorious. Hesperus is the highest in the Revelation Mountains at 9828 feet, which enabled us to see all the rugged peaks below. It was 6:00 p.m., May 2nd.

Then came the descent which could be tricky. At the picnic site we drank hot liquids, then scrambled down the rocks to the end of the glacial ice, about 150 meters. We descended further to the right than the ascent route because of the wider snowfield and fewer rocks. After a glissade in the morning hours before dawn we stopped at one of the rock bands. It was 3:00 a.m. and our route down was confusing. We decided to wait for the sun. It was an interesting sight -- three bodies sprawled out on the rocks, a pot of water boiling over, unnoticed by dreary eyes.

Our route was illuminated just before 4:00 a.m. Down we went between the rock bands on snow, over the snowfield to the waterfall. A piton placement paid off: a straight rap to the bottom of the ice. Once down the last twisted snow gully and a slog down the river, there was the tent. It was 8:00 a.m. on the 3rd after 36 hours of climbing.

As the Chinese say, "I have not conquered this mountain, yet the mountain and I have become friends." The rest of the two and a half weeks was spent on other peaks, but avalanches made for extremely limited climbing. Our team consisted of Justin Lesueur of New Zealand, Karl Swanson of Anchorage, and Steve Spaulding of Peters Creek.

Steve Spaulding

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- June 8 GULL ROCK
9 miles, 700' elevation gain, family trip, easy. Meet 8 a.m.
UAA parking lot.
Leader: Pat Klouda 243-3216
- 9 TWIN PEAKS TRAIL
8 miles, 4150' gain; strenuous, loop trip. Meet 8 a.m. UAA
parking lot. 55 ways #41
Leader: Eileen Cavanaugh 337-1394
- 15-16 DEVIL'S PASS TRAIL
20 miles, 3500' gain, strenuous. In by Summit Ck. trail, out by
Devil's Cr. trail. Use overnight cabin. Meet 8 a.m. UAA
parking lot. Call leader.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 16 PTARMIGAN PEAK
8 miles, 2600' gain, moderately strenuous. Ascent via northern
snow gully, ice axe needed. Meet at 8 a.m. UAA parking lot.
Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309
- 22-23 FLATTOP SLEEPOUT
4 miles, 1350' gain, easy. A club tradition. Leave Glen Alps
parking lot anytime. Do not assemble at UAA. 55 ways #31.
Leader: Mark Findlay 337-8666
- 29-30 SOUTH FORK EAGLE RIVER TO SYMPHONY LAKE
13 miles, 800' gain, easy. Meet 8 a.m. UAA parking lot. 55 ways
#37. Call leader.
Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917
- 29 RABBIT LAKE
Leader needed.
- 30 ROUNDTOP
Leader needed.
- July 4-7 COOPER LAKE TO LOST LAKE
30 miles, 2000' gain, moderate, a cross-country trip from the
Cooper Lake trail past Mt. Ascension to Lost Lake and then by
trail to the Seward Hwy. Possible climb of Mt. Ascension or
neighboring peaks. Meet 8 a.m. UAA parking lot. Call leader.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656, 563-3585
- 4-7 CROW PASS TO ARCTIC VALLEY
40 miles, 4500' gain, moderately strenuous. Cross-country over
Crow Pass, above Camp Creek and out Ship Creek. This annual trip
passes through some of the nicest parts of the Chugach Mnts.
Leader: Bill Stivers 562-4885

- 13-14 WILLIWAW LAKES and MT.
15 miles; 4000' gain; moderately strenuous. Come for a day trip Saturday, camp over night at the lakes or scramble to the summit. Meet 8 a.m. UAA parking lot. 55 ways #33.
Leader: Tom Macchia 345-1970
- 14 EAST TWIN PEAK
10 miles; 4000' gain; strenuous. Meet 8 a.m. UAA parking lot.
Leader: Pat Thompson 344-1167
- 19-20 CROW PASS
8 miles; 2000' gain, easy. Meet 6 p.m. Friday at UAA parking lot. Spend Friday night at Crow Pass. Saturday scramble around the pass for the day or, if another leader can be found, continue to Eagle River Visitor Center. 55 ways #25.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656 work: 563-3583
- 18-22 HARDING ICEFIELD TRAVERSE
5-day trip. Tustamena Glacier to Exit Glacier. 40 miles. All on ice except last 5 miles. Glacier travel experience required. Take motorboat across Tustamena Lake. Crampons up to the icefield, then snowshoes or skis to the Exit Glacier. 4000' elev gain is gradual, but heavy packs make this trip strenuous. Contact leader for travel arrangements and gear needed.
Leader: Willy Hersman 338-5132
- 27 ROUNDTOP, BLACKTOP, VISTA
10 miles; 4000' gain; strenuous. 55 ways #39. Meet 8 a.m. UAA.
Leader: Stuart Grenier 694-9755 337-5127
- 27-28 BENCH LAKE - JOHNSON LAKE TRAIL
23 miles; 1000' gain moderate. 55 ways #13. Meet 8 a.m. UAA
Leader: John Lohff 337-2291
- August 2-4 TEMPTATION PEAK
5350' gain, strenuous. By way of Snowhawk Valley.
Leader: Stuart Grenier h:694-9755 w:337-5127
- 3-4 REED LAKES
10 miles, 1600' gain.
Leader: Nan DeGood 337-4875
- 10 CRESCENT LAKE
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829
- 11 GLEN ALPS TO INDIAN VIA POWERLINE
Leader: Kathy Burke. 346-2841.
- 10-11 CURRY RIDGE
Leader needed.

- 17-18 PETERS HILLS
Leader: Harmut Pluntke 279-9252

Recently the hiking committee has added a schedule of mid-week hikes to be held in the evenings, usually on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There are not designated leaders for these hikes; simply meet at the UAA parking lot at 6 p.m. (unless otherwise stated). If you want more information about the hike, contact one of the committee members. Phone numbers are listed below the schedule.

- June 11 RENDEZVOUS PEAK
Easy.
- 18 INDIAN VALLEY
Easy.
- 25 BIRD RIDGE
4-5 miles. 2900' elev. gain. Easy.
- July 2 RABBIT LAKE
11 miles roundtrip. 1280' elev. gain. Easy.
- 9 NEAR POINT
7 miles. 2000' elev. gain. Easy.
- 10 THUNDERBIRD FALLS
2 miles. Easy.
- 16 ALYESKA GLACIER VIEW
3 miles. 2410' elev. gain. Easy. (Even easier if you take the chairlift.)
- 23 FALLS CREEK RIDGE
3 miles; 2400' elev. gain. Easy.
- 30 DEW MOUND
7 miles. 400' elev. gain. Easy.

THE LEADER IS REQUIRED NOT TO LET INADEQUATELY EQUIPPED HIKERS PARTICIPATE ON THE HIKE.

The hiking committee is seeking suggestions and leaders for week-long, weekend, and day trips. Contact: Jim Pommert 344-5656 work: 563-3583; Jane Stammen 563-7703; or Linda White 274-4989, or Kathy Burke 346-2841.