



Vol. 12, No. 4 / Fall 2001  
www.angeleschapter.org/wtc

# Newsletter

Newsletter of the Wilderness Training Committee

*Orange County Chair Tony Pond leads an apparently hesitant group of WTCers up the Mountaineers Route of Mt. Whitney. Did mutiny follow? See page 6 and find out...*

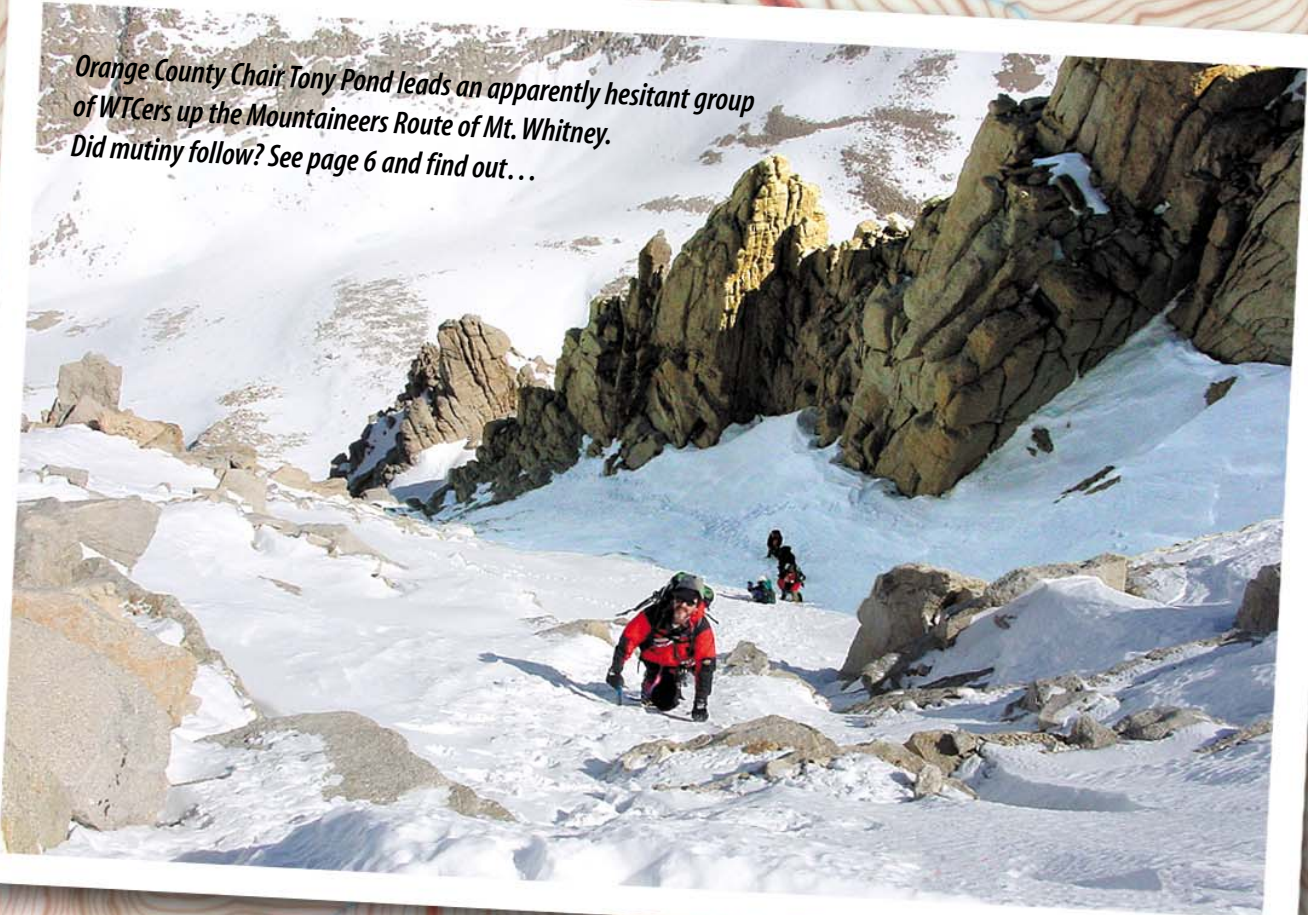


photo by Mark Roberts

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# WTC Graduation

## Pomp and circumstance

*Got your two Experience Trips under your belt? You'll need 'em to graduate. As of press time, this much is known about each group's graduation plans:*

**San Gabriel Valley** will hold their graduation at the San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) Ski Hut Sunday, October 21 (contact Registrar or your Group Leader for more information).

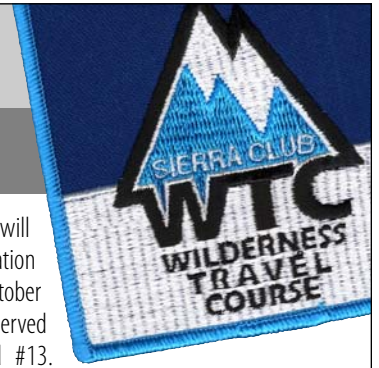
**West LA** will hold their graduation at Harwood Lodge Sunday, October 21. All students are encouraged to bring friends and family members. Everyone is welcome to arrive Saturday, October 20 and spend the night at the lodge. They'll need to bring sleeping bags/pad. There is a charge for overnight stays as well as day-use. Events include an optional peak hike (7-11:30am), a kinder, gentler family hike suitable for children (9:30am-11am), lunch at 11:30am followed by graduation ceremonies at 1pm (contact Registrar or your Group Leader for more information)

**Orange County** will hold their graduation in Joshua Tree October 20-21. OC has reserved sites #1, #3 and #13. Orange County has traditionally held graduation ceremonies on Saturday evening (contact Registrar or your Group Leader for more information).

**Long Beach** has not firmed up graduation details as of press time (contact Registrar or your Group Leader for more information).

*Graduation weekend has proven to be a true WTC highlight in years past; this year looks even better.*

*So go book your Experience Trips, send in your card and mark your calendar. For more detailed information contact your Registrar or Group Leader for more information.*



## Coming up in the next issue:

# WTC Garage Sale



Beginning with the next issue of the WTC Newsletter we'll be running a new feature where gear-heavy WTCers can advertise tents, packs, boots, jackets — any WTC related outdoor item a fellow student or leader might need. And the best part is **it's free**, so long as you're WTC staff, a student or graduate. The next issue will be distributed at each area's first meeting in January, giving new students the opportunity to maximize their gear budget (at least for those who have one). Ads should be emailed to [hikinedd@yahoo.com](mailto:hikinedd@yahoo.com)

If you have any questions call Edd Ruskowitz, WTC Newsletter editor, at (714) 771-6710. We reserve the right to refuse publication of any ad we deem offensive, inappropriate or falls outside the guidelines previously mentioned. Now, as a preview, here's our first ad:

- ▲ **Boreal Super Latok expedition boots, reddish brown leather, Size-Men's 9 UK, NEW (tag attached). \$175. (818) 352-7805.**

*The WTC Newsletter is published quarterly for students and staff of the Wilderness Training Committee and delivered via U.S. Mail or distributed at class sites. The WTC Newsletter is also available in color at the WTC website — [www.angeleschapter.org/wtc](http://www.angeleschapter.org/wtc) — as a download in PDF format. All questions, copy and photo submissions should be directed to Edd Ruskowitz, WTC Newsletter editor at (714) 771-6710.*

## Wanna see how cars camp?

*Then be sure to set aside the weekend of Nov. 10-11 for a WTC Car Camp at Joshua Tree National Monument to coincide with the Indian Cove LTC rock and navigation checkouts and practices. Contact Beth Epstein, WTC Outings Chair, for more information (see page 4).*

## Headline Deadlines

### Absolute deadlines for submitting outings

#### For publication in the Winter WTC Newsletter:

**October 26** Last day to submit restricted outings to the Outings Chair.

**November 9** Last day to submit non-restricted outings to Area Outings Coordinators.

**November 16** Last day for Outings Coordinators to submit write-ups to the Outings Chair.

**November 23** Last day for all WTC Newsletter submissions.

#### For publication in the November through February Angeles Chapter Schedule:

**June 18** Last day to submit both restricted and non-restricted outings to the Area Outings Coordinators.

**June 25** Last day for Outings Coordinators to submit write-ups to the Outings Chair.

# Student Experience Trips

These outings fill up fast! Before you send your SASEs (self-addressed, stamped envelopes) to the leaders, call or email the leader to confirm your chances of reserving a place on the outing. If you must cancel, please let the leader know immediately so others on the waiting list can fill that spot. Remember to bring your WTC Student Record Card on the outing and be sure to have the leader sign it. See you at graduation!

★ indicates a newly scheduled trip since last Newsletter

## September

### Sept 23-24 / Sat-Sun ★ Backpacking/WTC

#### I / Mosquito Lakes Backpack

Moderately strenuous backpack at moderate to slow pace to the Mosquito Lakes (10,000') in the Mineral King area of Sequoia N.P. First day 4 mi, 1750' gain on well worn trail, followed by routefinding, boulder-hopping and scrambling on granite slabs to campsite. Later xc dayhike with more scrambling to additional lakes for fishing and swimming, with possible climb of 11,000' peak adjacent to Hengst Peak on steep scree and talus slopes for fantastic views of entire Mosquito Lakes region. Sunday relax, fish, and swim before packing out to trailhead by mid-afternoon. Send sase with recent conditioning and backpacking experience to Provisional Ldr: Elena Hernandez Asst: Bill Jackson.

### Sept 22-23 / Sat-Sun ★ SPS

#### I / Mt. Silliman (11,188')

WTC students and newcomers welcome on this easy backpack from Lodgepole in Sequoia to camp above Silliman Meadow (4 miles, 1500' gain). Food theme potluck dinner. Sunday climb class 2 peak and out (7 miles, 3000' gain). Send sase and experience conditioning to Ldr: Tina Bowman. Co-Ldr: Doug Mantle.

### Sept 22-23 / Sat-Sun ★ Peak Climbing, Loma Prieta Chapter Mt. Henry (12,106)

Meet Saturday morning at the Maxson Trailhead at Courtright Reservoir (7,920) and hike 16 mi to Lower Indian Lake (elev 10,000'). Sunday bag the peak via class 2 west slopes and out. Contact leaders with resume of experience & conditioning. Ldrs: Charles Shafer, Bob Evans

### September 22-23 / Sat-Sun WTC

#### I / Mt. Tom (13,652')

Moderate 6,000'+ gain, 12 mile round trip weekend. Sat. bkpk to Horton Lake in E. Sierra near Bishop, 4 mile, 2250' gain. Set up camp and happy hour. Sun climb peak via SW ridge, 2 mi, 3570 gain. Return to camp and pack out. Send sase or e-mail with h/w phones, experience, conditioning and rideshare info to Ldr: Marnie O'Toole. Asst: Brad Hinkle

### September 22-23 / Sat-Sun WTC, Sierra Peaks

#### I/M / Dunderberg Pk (12,374'), Excelsior Mtn (12,446)

Fall color and lots of scrambling to these peaks above Virginia Lakes north of Yosemite. Sat backpack 2.5 mi, 1200' gain on Summit Lake Trail to camp at tarn below pass. Climb Excelsior's N ridge, 4 mi, 2300' more, return to camp for happy hour. Sun leader's choice on Dunderberg - bumpy SW ridge, 5 mi, 2000' gain or pack down and dayhike from cars. Send 2 sase or email, resume of experience and conditioning, H&W phones, rideshare info to Ldr: Beth Epstein. Asst: Kim Gimenez.

### Sept 29-30 / Sat-Sun ★ Peak Climbing, Loma Prieta Chapter Mt. Florence (12,432')

Come join us for an backpack in Sequoia National Park. We will start hiking early Saturday morning from the Mineral King trailhead. Florence Peak is the main goal of this trip. If conditions allow, we may decide to climb Vandever (11,947') Saturday and Florence on Sunday. Contact Ldr with resume of experience & conditioning. Ldr: Aaron Schumann. Co-Ldr: Stephane Mouradian.

## October

### October 6-7 / Sat-Sun WTC, Sierra Peaks

#### I / Three Sisters (10,612')

Fall backpack in the Western Sierra from Courtwright Reservoir to Cliff Lake, 4.5 mi, 1200' gain. Laze at lake or explore Dogtooth Peak and return for happy hour. Sunday climb Three Sisters, 3 mi rt xc, 1200' gain. Send 2 sase or email, H&W phones, resume of experience and conditioning to Ldr: Beth Epstein. Asst: Kim Gimenez.

### October 6-7 / Sat-Sun WTC

#### I / 3rd Annual Last Chance Backpack to Tahquitz Peak (8846')

Here is your last minute chance to graduate WTC! Sat backpack, 3.5 mi 1600' gain, from Humber Park in Idyllwild to Tahquitz Valley and set up camp. Dayhike to the summit of Tahquitz Pk Sat afternoon & return to camp. Sun hike to Skunk Cabbage Mdws and Red Tahquitz Pk, return to camp and pack out. Must carry all the water you need for the weekend. (Sorry!) WTC or equiv req'd. Send resume of conditioning and experience, H&W phones & rideshare info to Ldr: Georgette Rieck. Co-Ldr: Jason Lynch.

### Oct 12-14 / Fri-Sun ★ WTC, Sierra Peaks

#### I / Mt Wallace (13,377')

(Rescheduled from August) Fri backpack from Lake Sabrina to Moonlight Lake, 6.4 mi, 2,050' gain. Sat climb peak, 2.5 mi, 2,250' gain. Potluck Sat night. Sun break camp & hike out. WTC or equivalent required. Send resume, references, 2 sase to Ldr: Christy Grimsley. Asst: Sheryl O'Rourke.

### October 13-14 / Sat-Sun WTC, HPS

#### I / Quail Mountain and Lang Mine Backpack

Moderately paced, moderately strenuous 13 mi rt, 1800' gain backpack trip in Joshua Tree NP. Most of this trip will be offtrail with possible rock scrambling and brush obstacles. Participants will enjoy views from the tallest peak in Joshua Tree NP, but will need to carry all their water for the weekend. Send sase, H&W phones, email, recent conditioning and backpacking experience to Ldr: David Coplen. Asst: Diane Dunbar.

## November

### Nov 10-12 / Sat-Mon ★ Hundred Peaks, WTC

#### I / San Rafael Mtn (6593'), McKinley Mtn (6200'), Santa Cruz Peak (5570')

If you didn't get both experience trips done for this year's graduation, you can still finish next year. Strenuous, moderately-paced 32 mi rt, 8000' gain backpack on road and xc in San Rafael Wilderness. Send email with recent conditioning/backpack experience, H&W phones to Ldr: Byron Prinzmetal. Co-Ldr: Mars Bonfire.

# Trips of Interest

These trips do not qualify for WTC graduation requirements.

★ indicates a newly scheduled trip since last Newsletter

## Nov. 3-4 / Sat-Sun ★ **WTC, Desert Peaks**

### I / Sandy Pk (7062'), Last Chance Pk (8496')

(Rescheduled from April) Two moderate xc dayhikes with carcamp in the Last Chance Range near Death Valley, Sandy on Sat, Last Chance on Sun (11 mi rt, 2700' gain/5 mi rt, 3000' gain, respectively). High clearance vehicle required for Last Chance Pk. Send 2 sases, recent conditioning, H & W phones, e-mail address to Ldr: Sarah Anderson Asst: Beth Epstein.

## Nov. 17 / Sat ★ **Wilderness Adv, WTC**

### I / Pine City and Queen Mtn (5677'), Joshua Tree Nat'l park:

Moderately strenuous 6 mi rt, 1400' gain xc dayhike to Pine City and Queen Mtn in Joshua Tree. Some boulder scrambling and sandy washes to negotiate as we travel to little-visited Pine City on our way to often-visited Queen Mtn. For meeting time and location, send sase with recent conditioning/hiking experience, contact info to Ldr: Elena Hernandez. Asst: George Denny.

## Dec. 1 / Sat ★ **Hundred Peaks, WTC, OC Sierra Singles**

### I / Bernard Peak (5430'), Little Berdoo Peak (5440')

Two peaks in central Joshua Tree National Park. A fun xc romp up these 2 popular peaks, 2600' gain, approx 10 mi rt. Send SASE with cond/exp to leader. Possibly a campout the night before. Bring the usual essentials, 3-4 liters water and camera. Ldr: Cheryl Gill. Co-ldr: Diane Dunbar.

## Jan. 12 / Sat ★ **Hundred Peaks, OCSS, WTC**

### I / Mount Emma (5273'), Old Mt Emma (5063'), Cole Point (5604')

Three lovely peaks to climb in mid-winter. Great Antelope Valley views. Prospective WTC students welcome as a pre-conditioning hike. Approx. 11 mi rt with 2500' gain. Meet 7:00 am La Canada rideshare pt. Bring 3 liters water, lunch, mandatory lugsoles, 10 essentials. Rain cancels. Co-leaders: Cheryl Gill & Luella Fickle.

## Jan. 26 / Sat ★ **WTC**

### I / Pre-conditioning Hike, Boney Ridge, Sandstone Peak (3111')

Get in shape for WTC and enjoy beautiful views from the high point of the Santa Monica Mtns, Sandstone Pk. Moderately fast paced 11 mi, 2100 gain. WTC graduates are also invited: see old friends and encourage new students! Meet 7 am at either Malibu rideshare or Woodland Hills rideshare. Bring 3 liters water, raingear, long pants for brush, lugsoles, lunch. Co-leaders: Will McWhinney, Garen Yegparian.

# Outings Leader Directory

Please see Outings Leader Directory on page 4 of the WTC Newsletter print version for SASE and contact information

# Training Opportunities

These trips do not qualify for WTC graduation requirements.

★ indicates a newly scheduled trip since last Newsletter

## Sept. 29 / Sat ★ LTC

Thinking of becoming a Sierra Club Leader? The one-day LTC seminar at Griffith Park on October 13 is the first step. Today is the deadline for submitting applications to Don Creighton, LTC Registrar. Applications can be downloaded from the LTC website: angeleschapter.org/ltc.

## Sept. 30 / Sun LTC

### I/M/E / Grinnell Ridge Navigation

Nav noodles to satisfy basic (I/M) or advanced (E) level nav requirements: To receive homework assignment send navigation experience/training, etc. and sase to Leader: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

## Oct. 6 / Sat ★ Angeles Chapter, LTC

### C / CPR and "0" Level First Aid Class

This free class is made possible by a grant from The Friends of the Angeles Chapter Foundation. The class is open to LTC graduates and outings leaders who wish to refresh first aid skills. Includes AHA CPR card. Class size strictly limited. Send sase with deposit (check for \$50, Friends of the Angeles Chapter Foundation, returned at class or deposited in the event of a failure to attend) to Organizer: Ann Kramer

## Oct. 13 / Sat ★ LTC Lecture (see Sept 29)

## Oct. 21 / Sun ★ LTC, SPS

### I/M / Sheep Pass Joshua Tree Navigation

Nav noodles to satisfy basic (I/M) level nav requirements. To receive homework assignment send navigation experience/ training, etc. and sase to Ldr: Harry Freimanis Asst: Bob Bradshaw

## Oct. 26-28 / Fri-Sun LTC, WTC, Harwood

### 0 / Wilderness First Aid Course (WFAC)

Runs from 8 am Fri to 5:30 pm Sun. Proof of CPR within previous 2 yrs required. Course fee of \$140 members, \$150 non-members includes lodging, meals. Send sase, SC#, proof of CPR, check (WFAC - full refund through Sept 15) to Registrar: Markey Daley. Ldr: Steve Schuster.

## Nov. 10 / Sat ★ Angeles Chapter, LTC

### C / CPR and "0" Level First Aid Class (See Oct 6)

## Nov. 10-11 / Sat-Sun ★ WTC/LTC

### E/M / Indian Cove Rock Workshop/Checkoff

This intermediate and advanced workshop based on the rock requirements for M and E leadership. Checkoffs for M and E rock will take place on Sat. It is a restricted trip; to participate you must be a member of the Sierra Club and have a suitable rock climbing experience. The group car camp will be at the Indian Cove Campground in Joshua Tree National Park. Send sase and/or e-mail, recent climbing resume and rideshare info to Ldr: Virgil Shields. Asst: Darrell Lee

## Nov. 10-11 / Sat-Sun LTC/WTC

### I / Indian Cove Navigation

Navigation Noodles to satisfy Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Sat for practice, skills refresh, altimeter. Sun for checkout. To receive homework assignment, send navigation experience/training, rideshare info, H&W phones and sase to Ldr: Harry Freimanis Asst: Bob Bradshaw

## Nov. 15-18 / Thur-Sun ★

### C / Wilderness Advanced First Aid

This 36 hour course at O'Neil Regional Park, Orange County, is sponsored by A-16 and approved for 0-E leader requirements. Cost \$295 plus \$15 textbook. Contact Deana 619-283-2362 x156

## Nov. 17 / Sat ★ LTC

### 0 / Beginning Navigation Clinic

Mt Lowe (5603') area: 4 mi, 500' gain. Spend most of the day with an expert (one to three students per instructor) learning or sharpening your skills with a map and compass. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome. Not a checkoff. Many expert instructors will attend. Send sase for required materials early to Ldr: Diane Dunbar. Co-Ldr: Don Creighton

## Nov. 18 / Sun Wilderness Adventures, WTC

### I / Fried Liver Wash and Bingo Peak (2900')

Join us for a moderately paced, moderately strenuous 15 mile rt, 2000' gain hike in Joshua Tree NP. Hike thru the transition zone between the Colorado & Mojave deserts. Hike up Fried Liver Wash to the SW of Pinto Basin with a short side trip to climb Bingo Peak. Then continue up Fried Liver Wash to the E end of Pleasant Valley before returning to our starting point. Sturdy boots, 3 qts water and 10 essentials required. Send sase, H&W phones, email, recent conditioning and hiking experience to Ldr: David Copen. Asst Ldr: George Denny.

## Dec. 9 / Sun LTC/WTC

### I / Warren Pt Navigation

Navigation Noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice to satisfy either Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To receive homework assignment, send sase with navigation experience/training, rideshare info, H&W phones, email address to Ldr: Harry Freimanis Asst: Bob Bradshaw

# Wanted

The Chapter Fundraising Committee needs a few new members. If you are interested in fundraising and willing to attend a monthly evening meeting, please contact Ann Kramer (213) 489-6805 or [kramer\\_ann@hotmail.com](mailto:kramer_ann@hotmail.com) Experience is not necessary, and we do have a lot of fun.

The Angeles Chapter office needs volunteer bookkeeping or accounting assistance. If you can process bank deposits, make journal entries, prepare spreadsheets for a few hours during the workday, your assistance is particularly welcome. This is a perfect opportunity for a newly retired person or a student on break. To volunteer, contact Linda Hoyer (213) 387-4287, ext. 205, or [linda.hoyer@sierraclub.org](mailto:linda.hoyer@sierraclub.org)

# Whitney at last

## Trip Report

Mt. Whitney via the Mountaineers Route Trip  
by Tony Pond, Orange County WTC Chair, Group 3

All photos by Mark Roberts

I've knocked about on the big mountains of the Andes, even gotten my head above 21,000 feet on a remote summit in Bolivia. But for whatever reason I have never been on Whitney. Never even stepped foot on its trail. Never seen it up close. It's almost embarrassing, especially since I've done a lot of climbing in the Sierra.



*Why are the dogs hiding? Do they know something these OC3 renegades don't?*

So when Tom Mitchell suggested that he wanted to climb Whitney over the last weekend in April I thought, might as well give it a go. Now you need to understand that Whitney almost made its way onto our climbing schedule this year but got bumped by Williamson instead (which you may have read about). At first it was just going to be a small leader climb since we

were going to tackle the Mountaineer's route as a snow climb. But then we, Group 3, got stormed out of Gould the week before. Guilt intruded on better judgment and I opened it up to those who missed out on Gould. Next thing I knew I had a team of eleven.

The roster included Brad Hinkle, Marnie O'Toole, Gregg Adams and Mark Roberts, all Orange County Group 3 assistant leaders. Also along for the climb were Tom Mitchell (student OC3'00) and his friend Sean from Sacramento, Bob Yeager and Carrie Cox (formerly OC4, honorary Group 3 members), Natalya Shulyakovskaya and Ray Regalado (students OC3'01), and myself. Oh, and Haley and Comet, Marnie's dogs, were coming along, although I was a bit skeptical about this.

We did the usual routine: met at REI after work, fought traffic on the 91 and 15, ate at In'N'Out in Hesperia, then regrouped at the ranger station in Lone Pine to get a self-issue permit. Going through the permits in the box I discovered that there was an Ecco-Challenge team from Santa Barbara heading up the big one. I was looking for the WTC provisional M trip that Ron Campbell (Group 2 leader known for his gourmet skills) was on because I wanted to make sure we made a strong showing. Competition, you know. They were doing this as a three day trip and came up on Thursday. We were pushing for a two dayer.

We caravanned up Whitney Portal Road and finally rolled out sleeping bags in the overflow lot around midnight. At 3 I awoke to see a team of four double-timing out of the lot toward the trailhead; had to be the adventure racers. They looked strong and tough and efficient — the quintessential climbing team.

By sunrise, we stirred, had coffee and popartars, then sorted out group gear. I brought along a small rack and some pickets because I heard that at the top of the Mountaineer's Route there was a traverse with a lot of exposure, and was especially tricky if icy. The plan was to set a fixed line and have everyone clip in while they traversed this section. Once the tech gear, tents, and stoves were divvied up we hit the trail (after a "slight" technical delay for Brad and me). Should have had tea.

Needless to say, we got a late start, but we had all day to get to Iceberg lake where we intended to camp. This would put us within spitting distance from the start of the route.

With Comet running around like a dumb blonde, half on the trail and half off, we found our turnoff at the second stream crossing. The books make it sound like this is hard to find but it was pretty obvious. In fact, there's a sign farther back at the previous stream crossing saying this isn't it, in case you counted the very first water as a stream crossing.

Now we're looking for the Ebersbacher Ledges on the granite wall along the north side of the creek. These ledges give access up and through the drainage, which is choked out with willows, and let you out just below Lower Boy Scout Lake. But first you have to cross to the south side of the creek then back again to the north side. There were plenty of tracks in the snow to guide us through. Up ahead on the granite we could see a red helmet appear and disappear marking the progress of another party already on the ledges. We found the lone foxtail pine marking the entrance and could see that it would involve some third class scrambling to get up the ledge. Because of the dogs, Marnie and Brad decided to stay on the snow slope on the south side and work their way up rather than going over the rock. No problem since we could watch their progress and could tell where we both should come out.

We scrambled up the first short vertical section then cut right along the ledge to another vertical piece. The ledge itself is maybe three feet wide, but with lots of exposure. We climbed up the next leg, turning left along an upper ledge that ended in brush where a use trail led along a granite wall and then rejoined the upper reaches of the drainage. The drainage was full of impenetrable willow. We could see Brad and Marnie working their way up the opposite side in deep snow before they dropped out of view behind a slight rise. Regaining the snow ourselves we were about to crest out when Brad got our attention from the other side — Marnie had twisted her knee in a deep posthole. Mark, Bob, and I grabbed some extra ace bandages and started across the now narrow gully separating the two groups. The snow was soft and unconsolidated and we wallowed about unable to get up the steep rock slabs underneath. We called out to Brad that we'd cross over the top of our route and try to meet up with him from where our two routes would converge.

In a short time we got to Lower Boy Scout Lake and dropped our packs. While the group snacked Bob, Mark and



*Natalya Shulyakovskaya awaits the mule the others promised would stop by to pick her up.*

I started back toward Brad along the south slope of the drainage. But by this time Brad and Marnie were already moving again. Marnie's knee was tweaked but not bad enough that she couldn't continue on. Since they already had an elevation advantage they decided they would continue along a traverse and join us enroute to Upper Boy Scout Lake, rather than dropping down to the lower lake. Ahead, you could see the track through the snow marking the regular route and could predict where they would intersect us.

The three of us dropped back down to the lake, had a bite, then got the group going again. Twelve hundred feet of snow slog, but at least it was a cut-in track. Looking back we could see Brad and Marnie on their traverse but not making very good time — the snow was too soft. They should have dropped down with us to the lower lake — but who likes to lose elevation?

Passing Upper Boy Scout Lake we saw an encampment. I wondered if it was the provisional M trip with Ron Campbell, but they had to be higher up, at Iceberg, since they had set out the day before us (I later learned that it was them but they had been hit by altitude sickness and could go no higher). We skirted the ridge that separates Upper Boy Scout from Iceberg, passed beneath a small icefall, and broke on a small flat to wait for Brad and Marnie. I went back to the edge of the slope to gauge their progress when Marnie yelled up for some assistance carrying Brad's pack. I told the others to move on up and that I would catch them, then went downslope to help out. Breaking trail through unconsolidated snow had extracted its price from Brad. He looked beat.

When we got to the flat Brad and Marnie decided to set camp. Even the dogs looked done in. The tentative plan was that Brad would try to catch us in the morning up near Iceberg Lake while Marnie would give her knee a rest. If not, they'd wait several hours before heading out to see if anyone came down early. They selected a site behind a large boulder giving protection from the wind. I grabbed my pack and set out to catch the group, passing a climber who said Iceberg was another hour ahead. God! That far?

By this time the main body was moving considerably slower (we were at 12,000') and when I caught them everyone looked pretty knackered. We decided to find a flat and set camp rather than make the final push up to Iceberg.

Once the tents were up exhaustion hit me, then cold started to set in. The wind picked up as Gregg cooked on one of the stoves at his vestibule. Luckily, from my tent door I could hand out my bowl for ramen and tea, but I didn't feel like squatting around a tiny stove. Another stove was going in Bob and Carrie's big tent, so everyone was eating. Happy hour was pretty subdued. As I finished I could hear Mark say he had doubts about whether he'd be up for tomorrow's climb, he was so spent. And Mark never gets worn out. Tom and Sean were ensconced in their tent keeping pretty quiet. Ray was in with me. Natalya, dining in the big tent, cut short the Russian folk singing as night set in. Sleep was a welcome ally.

We awoke at 4 and got the stoves fired up. Everyone's spirits had returned. Except for Sean. He had lost his stomach all night and was still sick even as we were pulling on boots and gaiters. We crossed a short distance by headlamp then got to the wall that separated us from Iceberg Lake. The sun was now up. We had another steep slope to climb, which we agreed would have been too much for us yesterday with full packs. A large team was coming down. After putting on crampons we started up the slope. The crampons bit well into

the morning crust but nevertheless Gregg and I kept watchful eyes on Nat and Ray.

When the slope leveled out we regrouped at some rocks above Iceberg Lake before starting up the main couloir of the Mountaineer's Route. Looking straight on, this was steep, and long. At this point Gregg decided to turn back, although I think he could have made it. So we started up. Mark got in the lead and just kept going, like the Energizer bunny. I tried to maintain the same relative distance between us; boy was that hard. The snow was softening up and there were a million steps cut in, so the going was not technically tough. I think in about an hour (or was it two?) we reached the notch where the route levels out. We regrouped.



*Lower Boy Scout Lake. Do we have time for a quick dip? Real quick?*

Apparently there is a 300 yard traverse due west which joins up with the edge of the summit plateau. This segment has seen some bad accidents in snowy conditions due to the exposure (I think last year a guy slipped and fell to

his death). It was not cut in yet. If there was a track it would have been safer, but there wasn't. So we followed the existing footsteps that took a sharp left toward the first chute just past the rocks. While the others scrambled over some 3rd class moves I set some pro in a nice crack at the top of the rock ledges, which we would use as a belay anchor on the way down.

Up the chute. The old Mark again took the lead and just kept going and going. It must have been 600 feet of steeper snow than the main couloir, but it accepted deep kicksteps. At the top the angle steepened more since there was a near vertical slab of rock underneath the snow. Everyone managed to clear this without incident. Going down would be a concern.

We were now on the summit plateau, and just beyond was the tin hut marking the apex. We were on top of the "lower 48!" And we had it all to ourselves. The view down the east face, which looked sheer from our vantage, was fantastic — a straight drop-off of several thousand feet. Good solid granite. Williamson and Russell raised their big summits, but we were still higher. Ten thousand feet below was the floor of the Owens Valley. Not a bad view. We signed the registrar, while Bob used the "facility." Who had the camera? Quick!

Going down is always dicier. So I decided to pull out the rope. Anchoring to a solid rock I lowered everyone down a full rope length, then doubled the cord and rappelled down, then downclimbed while on Bob's boot axe belay below — just in case of a slip and fast slide. Mark got down to the rock ledge, clipped in the anchor there, and then when the rope arrived, started belaying. Meanwhile, two 2-man teams worked their way past us; one team on ropes, while the other was test driving their ice axes.

Back at the notch, then downclimb a bit, then a long, and bumpy, glissade to Iceberg Lake. Another short glissade, followed by a hop, skip, and a jump, and we were back in camp.

Energy was pretty low; camp came down slowly. Bob and Carrie decided to stay put for another day. They were lucky — they got my uneaten happy hour item. No, it wasn't a red bell pepper.

With packs on our backs we glissaded out, eventually working our way down Brad and Marnie's snow route opposite the Ebersbacher ledges. By dusk we hit the cars and soon were wolfing down burgers at the Totem Café.

Good climb. Why did I wait so long?



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## Registration 2002

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