Chairman's Corner

In case you are not aware, the Sierra Nevada experienced an exceptionally heavy snowfall this past winter and spring. In fact, I'm told that the Sierra snowpack is the heaviest in 14 years. This assures a very beautiful summer mountaineering season.

Unfortunately, it also assures a hazardous season for the unwary. The Sierra rivers and streams will be running fast and deep, and as such will make many otherwise easy trips difficult.

Therefore, it behooves all of us (especially leaders) to take precautionary measures. We should all immediately review safe stream crossing procedures. We must all make sure that every hiking group has at least one rope along. And, we must continue to use our usual good mountaineering savvy on all of our Sierra trips. Let's have an exhilarating but safe hiking and climbing season in 1980.

Gene Mauk

Note to Peakbaggers with flagging zeal: So you think that you've got it tough to top out on that peak? Just listen to this old timer on the crossing of the Sierras with wagon trains.

OVERTHE SIERRA NEVADA - J. Golsborough Brough Oct. 3rd, 1849

We moved up very early to ascend the Pass - up a steep, hard, sandy, and winding road. - The first ascent of about 1/4 mile was gentle enough, and brought us to a sort of a valley with a spring and rill in it, and some bunch grass. Here was a grave, thus inscribed:

"Jno. A. Dawson,
St. Louis Mo.
Died Oct. 1st, 1849
from eating a poisonous root at the spring.
"

The spring just below - In this 1st valley, or platform, above the base, saw numerous ox-camps, breaking up and moving forward. - Some had a team of 10 yoke of oxen.

Main course to the top, n.w. In the 2nd valley, or rise more ox trains moving ahead. - Reached the foot of the big hill. - A long and smooth sand dune, pretty steep ascent. - 10 dead oxen marked the trail. - Cross the trail about midway up this hill, lay an ox on his knees, - dying, and covered with old gum coat, by his compassionate owner; but it was unavailing. - The dust was suffocating, and the animals and wheels went over him, in the haste and trouble of the steep ascent. - The first wagon of my train, which reached the top of the Pass, displayed the Stars and stripes, to encourage those in the rear. Found many ox-wagons on the flat top of the Pass. Temp. on top of the Pass, at 8 A.M.

While on top of the Pass, looking down the En side, at the bustle, and directing the ascent, I was amused.

I thought the infirn ox in the road below, occupied rather an enviable position - In the centre of a very broad, sandy, and dusty road, men urging their heavy ox-trains up the steep hill, with lashes, imprecations, & shouts, some riding up on horses & mules, and clouds of blinding dust & sand flying. There rode up, an old man, on a jaded horse; a mattress covered the horse, the sick man astride and laying over on his breast, with a coverlid thrown over him; and a corner trailing in the dust, he looked pale and haggard; had his arms around the neck of the old horse. - He was afflicted with the flux and scurvy. Another unfortunate followed him on a mule, enveloped in a blue blanket, and barely able to retain his seat; he had the fever and the ague. Some small boys not over 10 years of age were leading jaded animals up.

Women were seen, with the trains, occupied at checking the wheels, while the men were allowed to blow on the ascent. A man had a baby in his arms, and in the midst of the thick dust, was urging up his team. Some wagons had as many as 12 yoke of oxen in them. One wagon, with women and children in it, when near the summit, became uncoupled, and down hill it ran - stern for most, with great rapidity. - The women and children screamed, men shouted, and with the rest of the folks, there was a great clamor. A dead ox, a short distance in front of a heavy team, and men by them, brought up the backing out vehicle, most luckily without damage to anyone.

FRI-SUN, SEPT 19-21, 5PS, E: STARR KING (9092') & CLARK (11,522')

Cancelled from May 24-26 due to too much snow, the trip will now go in the fall. Technical, limited to experienced climbers. Contact Dave Perkins, 8869315 or George Davis, 343 8430.

COVER PHOTO: North Palisade as seen from the top of Mt. Sill. Photo taken July 21, 1978 by Matt Loo. The ECHC is in need of more cover photos. Send 8.5 by 11 B & W glossy prints to the editor-see cover.
ADAMS PK, CASTLE PK, MT. ELWELL, ENGLISH MTN, MT. LOLA, SIERRA BUTTES, TINKER KNOB

The above peaks in area 24 around Reno are easy but rewarding climbs. I recently did 5 of them in 4 days and could have done them in 3 days if I hadn't spent too much time trying to find trailheads, so to help others conserve time and gasoline I submit the following directions.

Castle Pk: From the Donner Pass rest area on I-80 go ¼ mi W to Castle Pk turnoff, go R ½ mi to end of pavement. Park here if you fear for your car; otherwise drive as far as you feel safe. I drove my van 1.0 mi up the dirt road and hiked the last ½ mi up to Castle Pass. From the pass, take the obvious trail up the ridge, keeping L at the spectacular cliffs (but not too far L); above the cliffs keep R past the first two false summits, to the E side of the actual summit. Easy 3rd class from here up the last 50 ft. My hiking time, 2½ hr round trip.

English Mtn: From I-80 near Truckee take SR89 north about 14 mi to paved Jackson Meadows Reservoir road, go L about 17 mi, cross the dam. From the W end of the dam, go as follows: 0.9 mi, fork, sign RIP "Bowman Lake 7", keep L on gravel road; 2.5 mi, Ranger station, road becomes dirt; 3.2 mi, fork, sign RIP "Catfish Lake", keep L on 19N11; 3.8 mi, t.o. to Catfish Lake, go straight; 5.9 mi, cross French Creek; 7.2 mi, fork, keep R; 7.3, fork, sharp L (100 ft past faint fork L); 7.6, small lake (7052 on Emigrant Gap topo). Park. If you come to Tollhouse Lake (sign), you are too far; come back 0.4 mi and keep L. Hike W NW from car, keeping L of ridge to avoid many false summits, until el. 7800'. My hiking time, 3 hr round trip.

Mt Lola: From SR89, take the Jackson Meadow Reservoir road and go as follows: 1.5 mi, L on Independence Lake gravel road; 2.3 mi, R on gravel road, sign "Webber Lake 8 mi"; 3.4, L on unmarked side road, not shown on Donner Pass topo. At 2.1 mi up this road, fork, go R; at 3.3, bridge. I parked my van here; 4 WD cars can go about a mile further; passenger cars might better park at the fork. Hike up the road about a mile to a large cut-off section of log blocking the road, continue up the trail to the summit. (The trail runs between the road and the creek, starting at a footbridge about 100 yards up the creek from the bridge; the trail is easier walking.) My hiking time, 2-3/4 hr r.t.

Alternative route, coming back from English Mtn: About 11 mi E of dam, sharp R on gravel rd; 0.7 mi, cattle guard, sharp L; cross river on bridge; 3.0 mi sign "Mt Lola Trail"; 3.4 mi, side road described above, turn R.

Sierra Buttes: Take SR89 N to SR49; L on 49 over Yuba Pass to Gold Lake rd; N about 1 mi to Packer Lake rd; at 3 mi, sign "Packer Lake ½", keep L 0.1 mi to parking area, sign "Sierra Buttes Trail". Hike up trail (actually 4WD road); at cross road about 1 mi up (7200' el.), take trail straight ahead. Trail meets 4 WD road at 8200' which ends at summit block. There are 177 steps from here to the lookout. My hiking time, 2½ hrs r.t.

Tinker Knob: Usually done along with Granite Chief from the Sqaw Valley ski area. To do it by itself, don't try to follow the roads as shown on the topo or the Forest Service map; they bear no relation to reality. It took me three trips to find this route. From I-80 near Truckee, go as follows: S on SR89 3.3 mi to paved rd, sign "Cabin Creek Road", "Stanford Wood Camp 6", go R. At 1.0 mi, L through gate on gravel rd; 1.2 mi, fork, keep L; road becomes oiled; 1.8 mi, fork, keep R; 3.2 mi, oiled rd ends, go straight; 3.7 mi, fork, go straight; 4.0, fork R, keep L; 5.0, Stanford Wood Camp, with ruins of log cabins. Passenger cars should park at the end of the oiled road. I got my van to the wood camp, but it wasn't easy. 4 WD cars can go past the wood camp about 1¼ mi further. Hike road around L side of wood camp; at about ½ mi, take fork to R and immediate next fork to L; when road peters out on broad ridge, follow ridge W SW, across 2 saddles, across trail, and to summit. My hiking time 2-3/4 hr r.t.
Mt Adams and Mt Elwell were done as a day hike 2 years ago; as I reconstruct my notes, they are as follows:

Mt. Adams: N on 395 from Reno about 25 mi; at Hallelujah Junction go L on 70, 5 mi to Chilcoot. Turn R on Frenchman Reservoir rd, go as follows: at 2.3 mi, R on Forest Service rd; 4.3 mi, 4-way intersection in meadow area, hard right at sign R.I.P. "Mt Adams"; 4.5 mi, fork, stay L; 4.9 mi, mine buildings. Road goes N, then comes back SW of peak (in Sec. 30 of Chilcoot topo; road extends further than shown). Stay on main road, avoiding side branches, until it crests out on ridge at 7.4 mi; park. Hike up ridge to R past 1st false summit, into saddle, over 2nd false summit to peak. My hiking time 2-3/4 hr r.t.

Mt. Elwell: Continue W on 70 past Blairsden to SR89, S to Gold Lake rd (new paved rd, not on Sierra City topo). At sign "Graegle Lodge" at a large curve in the road, turn R about 1/4 mi to sign R.I.P. "Mt Elwell, Smith Lake", park. Hike up trail to jct, sign "Mt Elwell", continue to summit. My hiking time, 4 hr r.t. According to Barbara Reber, can return by trail past Long Lake, as shown on topo, making a loop trip.


Previous write-ups for these two peaks (Bill Russell, 21-4, and Howard McFadden, 23-5) have described the high water and snow conditions that exist when the trip is done in May. Last Labor Day weekend Henry Heusinkveld, Sherry Harsh, and I packed in and climbed these two mountains, so I can add some comments to the previous write-ups.

From Wishon Dam, go about 4 miles south on the paved road; the gravel road to the trailhead is marked by a sign "Crown Valley Trail". Take it for 0.9 miles and park in a large flat area on the right. The trail is directly across the road. The trail itself is well signed. Some confusion is caused by a 4WD road that crosses the trail now and then; pay no attention to the road except for a half mile portion in Section 20 near Cow Meadow, where trail and road coincide. The trail to Spanish Lake is as shown on the topo, not at the west end of Wet Meadow, as claimed by one of the write-ups; however, the Crown Valley Guard Station is not where shown, but instead is about at the boundary between Sections 25 and 30.

The stream crossings presented no problems this time of year, so we packed in easily to Crown Creek on Saturday and did Tehipite Dome on Sunday morning. However on Sunday afternoon, hiking over toward the Spanish Lake area, an unexpected problem appeared - water. There is water at the ranger station but from there on to our Sunday night campsite, there was no running water - nothing but a few muddy puddles. We headed for the small lake a half mile east of Spanish Lake, expecting to find water there; unfortunately, there was nothing running in or out of the lake, and the lake water itself was full of little brown larvae of some unknown species. We finally filled our canteens by straining lake water through a handkerchief (I happened to have a clean one) and boiling it. The boiling (over a wood fire) gave the water an interesting smokey flavor, but we managed with it to climb Spanish Mtn. on Monday. We didn't find good water until we got to Statum Creek about noon Monday. So, if you want to do Spanish Mtn. in the late summer, be warned that there is no good running water along the Spanish Lake trail anywhere between Crown Valley Ranger Station and Statum Creek at Statum Meadow.

John Backus
PRIVATE TRIP REPORT FOR SIERRA ECHO

Aug 29 - Sept 4, 1979

Two of us participated in an enjoyable, precipitation-free backpacking-climbing odyssey covering most of the Triple Divide quad over a 12 day period. The trip began with a cross-country trek from Wolverton to Moose Lake and then on to Tamarack Lake via a gorgeous cross-country route. The trailless route from Moose Lake to the Elizabeth Pass trail involves an easy class 2 crossing of the ridge between Buck Canyon and the Eliz. Pass area.

The route from Tamarack L to Lion L is loose, rough, steep (cl 2). Tamarack L should be circled to the right (S). Lion Rock was climbed via chute on the E. side from near "Lion Rock Pass" - had exposed cl. 3 climbing to avoid steep ice and snow, then S ridge to top. Mt. Stewart was attained by dropping part way into Nine Lks Basin-then up SE slopes. Traverse from Lion Rock directly is definitely 4th cl., or above. Then return to Lion Lk with a rewarding campsite.

Next Triple Divide Pk. was climbed from Cloud Cnyn after 2nd cl. crossing of Lion Lk Pass (had lots of hard snow on N side). Triple Div. was climbed easily via 2nd cl. East ridge.

Whaleback ridge can be attained from either side but leaving Cloud Cnyn up through whitebark pines from about 10,000 ft. level is probably best. Then traverse ridge to N on west side up evident chutes below ridge top, (some with chockstones—surpassed by a bit of hard class 3 in places) to summit.

Kern Pt. was an easy but long Cl 2 ascent from Grissom Lk on the Colby Pass Tr.—panoramic views. Picket Guard's N ridge proved to be an easy and enjoyable Cl 3? (Rope) ascent.

Next Milestone and Midway were attacked from Milestone Bowl. The W ridge of Milestone can be attained from the S via easy Cl 3 ledges and loose rock. Then the standard W ridge route brings one to the summit. A descent over notch to N brought us into Milestone Basin. A tricky traverse over hard ice & snow complicated the crossing of the E are of Midway passed through a notch at about 12,500 after which the ascent to Midway's top was trivial cl 2. Getting back to Milestone Bowl over Milestone Pass was uncomplicated Cl 2, but the loose, large talus blocks on N side would make me think twice about using it as a backpack route.

Glacier Ridge was climbed from Cloud Cnyn—leaving from the 10,200 level; summit block was cl 4 as described in previous Echo. A rope could have been thrown over top for a belay.

The long backpack returning to Lodgepole via Roaring River, Sugarloaf Meadow and Silliman Pass is initially wet and boggy then hot and dry Mt. Silliman from Silliman Pass is a longer ascent than one might first guess. Easy Cl 2 after dropping down on the S side is easiest. A chute on N side was used for descent which contained one Cl 2 chockstone.

All in all the area was beautiful, scenic and enjoyable to explore.

MIKE AND KAREN LORR
The time has come to ease my conscience with at least a brief mention of three hitherto unreported trips which I led in late 1978. Briefly they are:

#1- SENGERS-HOOPER, 9/16-17/78; Asst: Campy; Participants: 20
We used the standard route from Florence Lake, taking the ferry, to our camp at the Sally Keyes Lakes. Ten persons continued on to climb Mt. Senger in the afternoon and they returned to camp just at dark to complete 3,000 feet of gain with packs and another 2000 feet with knapsacks. The next morning we hiked over Selden Pass and were treated to a beautiful view of Marie Lake, Mt. Hilgard, Recess Peak etc. After climbing Hooper we returned to camp for lunch. At this time I had the opportunity to successfully practise the Heimlich manoeuvre removing food stuck in the esophagus of a choking climber who got a piece of his baloney sandwich stuck so that he couldn't breath. Later we packed out, all the way out around the lake, as we missed the last boat run of the 1978 season by a couple of hours! Special thanks to Greg Vernon for helping lead Senger.

#2- HOMERS NOSE, 10/21-22/78; Asst: Campy; Participants: 25
This was my third lead of the peak and I just learned why Bill T. Russell has used it for his Navigation Noodle. After an interesting exploration of Clough Cave which included disturbing a flutter of bats I led the innocents up a brush ridge next to Squaw Creek rather than taking the correct cow path near Pigeon Creek. After floundering in Manzanita for half an hour I finally crossed west and got on route only to loose it again somewhere near 5600 feet. Quickly regaining the trail we were in Surprise Camp by mid-afternoon. Our reception was hostile as two members of the group were stung by yellow jackets that were nesting in the bank of Bennett Creek. The highlight of the trip for me was the finding of Palmer Cave which had eluded me on my previous climbs. The cave is properly located on the Kaweah Quadrangle and can easily be found with the help of this sketch:

![Schematic of Surprise Camp and Bennett Creek](image)

The mouth of the cave is a great yawning pit, fifty feet deep, and requiring a rappel to enter. We did not. The next day we climbed Homers Nose and after a leisurely stop on the summit we returned to camp and our cars, loosing the route only one more time.

#3- TAYLOR DOME-ROCKHOUSE, 10/28-29/78; Asst: John Robinson; Participants: 29. Six years previously I had led these peaks from Big Meadow. This trip, the season's Sierra finale for many, was led from south of Taylor Meadow. The area around the roadhead at Rattlesnake Meadow is the scene of much logging activity but logging stops just north of there and our route
Saturday north to Manter Meadow and turning east along the creek and up an easy ascent of Rockhouse is among some of the finest country in the southern Sierra. Krista Knute claimed her sixth SPS peak on this climb. On our return I took a straight-line course to the saddle immediately east of Church Dome. Shorter it might have been but it involved an awful lot of short elevation losses and gains and many hikers reminded me of my claim in the morning that this would be an easy route to the peak.

Saturday night was memorable. Many people had joined in bringing the fixings for a Mexican potluck, complete with Dos Equis cerveza. Nick Matyas cooked some special hot dishes and Sid Davis joined us late but just in time to share his wine.

Sunday we hiked through Taylor Meadow and beyond to the saddle between point 8,240 and Taylor Dome. Everyone made the summit. Some then returned directly to the cars while a group of six or eight stayed on the ridge to explore Church Dome. We were unable to climb it as it has a difficult route, high 5th class on the west and east sides of the summit block. John Robinon told of the original SPS exploratory trip to the area to check out Church Dome as the peak on the ridge for inclusion on the SPS list. After looking it over it was discovered that a near by dome was slightly higher so it was climbed and named by the SPS for the meadow and the creek it overlooks.

MT. SILL - NORTHEAST BUTTRESS - SWISS ARETE DICK BEACH AUG 30-31

This mountain is a classic from any direction. The view is considered one of the finest in the east Sierra. From the Northeast buttress the scenery is even more spectacular.

Dave King and I left the South Fork roadhead at a cool 4pm Friday. We worked our way up to one of the tarns about 500 ft below Contact Pass. The plan was to get up early (which we didn't), climb and return over Contact and out the North Fork.

To our surprise, we found three other groups of two heading for the same route. "Ugh". Patiently, with good weather and clean rock ahead, we started. This route is described nicely in the old Climber's Guide. The ascent starts out with three 5.4 pitches, but the fantastic aspect of the Swiss Arete is the outstanding handholds that one encounters in the most wishful places. The route is straight forward with lots of exposure - even a small overhang pitch - and you, great holds, with great gutta.

Climber's Guide describes "one awkward move" which involves hanging all you have out and around a corner to a very convienent antique piton. From here the route is low 5th which leads to easy 3rd and 4th to the summit.

Our descent was made easy with ice axe down to the Saddle between Geyley and Sill by the standard route. We met two hot looking Chicks at the saddle which were watching us as much as we were watching them. Luckily one of them was my wife.

From this point I do not recommend our route of departure. I have left nothing at Contact pass which means there is no reason ever to return to it. Our group spent an extra two hrs coming out to the North Fork, plus an extra hour down to the cars from the charming two hour parking roadhead. With a party in progress Sat. night at Big Pine, this was by far our biggest obstacle to overcome to return to Bishop.

PS: Who took the great old register book off of Sill, the replacement is a joke!!
Three hearty stalwarts (or, at least one hearty stalwart and two regular stalwarts) met at 9 AM at the Yosemite Permit kiosk near Tuolomne Meadows Lodge. After securing a permit, Lou Brecheen, Steve Terrell and I moved our cars and packed to the Lodge trailhead. The hike in, along wide, green Lyell Canyon is quite beautiful. The Lyell Fork of the Tuolomne River meanders placidly among green meadows, high ridges and laid back anglers. We wholed away the day by hiking 19 miles south and gaining approximately 1500'. Most of the gain comes in the last two miles. We established base camp near a small pond below the falls at the south end of Lyell Canyon. Steve Terrell engineered our food bags in such a way that they were poised a solid forty feet in the air, and slung between two trees. Our food was completely undisturbed, which was a contrast to two years ago when I had all my food ripped off.

The next morning was overcast. But the three of us mounted the famous Lyell Glacier after contouring around the falls on the Donahue Pass trail, and proceeding west. We used crampons and ice axes on the sun cups. By walking on the ridges we gained the Lyell-Maclure saddle quickly. From the saddle, we looked east and observed Lyell’s west ridge. At this point it reminded me of a conning tent on a submarine. Upon closer inspection, we found several short, easy 3rd class ledges that took us to the top of the fin. We then, contoured around until we found easy second class slopes which took us quickly to the top. Here, I placed a new register book. This was my fourth attempt at Lyell and I was quite happy to have made it. One year I was wiped out by Jury Duty. The next year my food was ripped off. The year after that I had badly blistered feet. Returning to the saddle, Steve and Lou and I looked at some routes off the north face. These looked tempting, however the ice was extremely hard and it appeared so steep that if someone stepped off, they might be sent cannonading across the sun cups at risk of bodily injury.

After having lunch at the saddle, we decided to cancel our climb of Maclure because of threatening clouds, soft snow in the glacier, and just plain tired bods on the part of Steve Terrell and myself. Ironically, it never did rain, so I will have to go back again someday for Maclure. (A prospect I relish greatly). The hike out the next day was pleasant.

Total elevation gain - 4,394 ft. Hiking distance, approx. 30 miles. Maps, Tuolomne Meadows and Merced peak. Equipment needed. Ice Axes and crampons for early morning ascent along glacier. Knee gaiters for waist deep wallowing upon return across glacier. A rope is not necessary but was a great comfort to us. . . . . it probably would be a necessity if you are caught on the peak by rain. Lyell’s 3rd class does have some exposure, and if rocks are wet and slippery, you may want to belay.

Ostracizer: When a female member is kicked out of the club.
Delighted: How a firefly feels after backing into a lawn mower.
Disaster: What happens to a stewardess who backs into an airplane prop.
Unstable: A horse that won’t stay at home.
Undermine: To dig. If you don’t undermine— I won’t underyours.
INCONSOABLE PEAK  

The one week delayed winter climb decided to try the high point on Inconsolable Ridge. Ten climbers started from the barricade on the South Lake road above Bishop, and snowshoed the 5 miles to Parchers Camp, which was mostly buried in snow. The weather was sunny and warm, but there was an omen of things to come in the snow flags occasionally streaming from the high ridges. The climbing for the day consisted of zig-zaging up the steep 1500 ft ridge behind Parchers Camp to a long bowl tucked right under the Inconsolable Ridge at about 11,000 ft.

As we crested the hill the wind greeted us and was our constant companion. Except for occasional clumps of weather beaten pines the bowl is pretty smooth and offers little natural protection. The wind whipped snow clouds sailing across the steep slopes which had been etched into giant scallop patterns was a beautiful sight in the brilliant sun. However, it was a somewhat numbing, frustrating job erecting tents.

All night the wind pounded with 50 to 60 knot gusts and each of us pictured our tent disintegrating into rags. They all held in spite of broken and bent frame rods. The conditions were no better in the morning and it seemed risky to trust the tents another night. There was no way to leave the tents unattended so we decided to pack our gear, then set out for the mountain and see how far we could go leaving a reasonable time to fight back down against the wind and out to the cars by evening.

We had a couple people who were not in the required physical condition for winter mountaineering, so when the going got rough the five strongest went ahead, the weaker turned around and headed back with the leader. The report from the top was that the winds were strong, the chill factor low. They ran out of time with about an hour of climbing to go.

MT. THOMSON  

For those who think our winter trips never make the summit we wish to, beltedly, report that in 79 we finally succeeded in combining the right weather and the right route to reach the top of Mt. Thompson. Four of us made the hike and it was our third try. Our camp was at upper Baboon Lake, which is a pretty hard snowshoe hike from the Lake Sabrina Road barricade. The route leads up and across Sunset Lake, up a steep hill and out into the giant Thomson-Powell glacier bowl. This is traversed toward the low point on the ridge. It is important to take the right-hand chute up to the ridge, though it looks a bit higher than the nearer one several hundred meters to the east. Having attained the ridge, we cropped down steeply about 200 m, traversed eastward less than a km and ascended a chute to the wide summit plateau. The high point was a 50 m citadel of rocks on the north edge of the plateau. We spent another night at Baboon Lake and had a leisurely trip out.

An interesting side light was picking up a lost puppy at the road head. Despite constant discouragement by wags of shouts, chasing, and snowballs he followed us at a distance all the way to camp. It was very cold and since he was so young, finally was adopted and got tent privileges and food scraps. He followed us all the way to the peak, actually making the ascent at least twice as he constantly chased, kicked out snow balls down the steep slopes. The episode has a happy ending too, for as we trudged back to the cars 3 days after leaving, a woman drove up and with great relief reclaimed her little boy’s lost dog, which they had just about given up.
PILOT KNOB and LAMONT PEAK
March 3-4, 1979
Ron Jones

Saturday morning I met three climbers near the Bloomfield Ranch close to Cnyx in order to climb Pilot Knob. The South Fork of the Kern was too high to cross at the usual spot near the highway and we were forced to follow the river about one mile north of the ranch to a stream gaging cable trolley. Three arm wearying trips got the four of us across and on our way to a routine climb of the peak via the east ridge. Upon our exit we returned the trolley to the proper side of the river. Sunday the same group of four made an easy ascent of Lamont Peak across mostly snow covered slopes. These are recommended early spring fun climbs.

MT. PERKINS and COLOSSEUM MTN.
May 5-6, 1979
Jones/Goebel

Thirteen climbers and skiors met Saturday morning at Scotty Spring, north of Independence, to repeat a solo climb I made in May of 1978. We were able to caravan another mile to the first big switchback in the road at 6400 feet. Shouldering packs and skis we hiked up the mining road in beautiful warm sunny weather to 8500 feet in Armstrong Canyon and the first snow. Here we got on the snow and climbed up the canyon. We were met by some terrifically strong blasts of wind (50 MPH ?) blowing down the slope. Those on skiis were nearly knocked off their feet and everyone had to stand immobile during the heavy gusts. Finally we reached basecamp at 9600 feet and our tents were set up in the wind.

That night the wind continued blowing fiercely and several tents were blown down. Eric Schumacher's Kelty was picked up and carried over a small ridge. Other gear was scattered about.

Sunday morning the wind had abated a little but was still blowing hard. Mark and I agreed that it would be prudent to cancel the climb of Perkins and Colosseum. Gene Mauk and two others received our permission to try Perkins. They went up the north east snow slopes, encountered hard winds on the ridge (but not gusty) and then traversed south finding the route high class two with a couple of third class moves. The non-climbers had lunch in Independence. Gene and his party returned to their cars by 4:15. I will lead this trip again in 1980.

Ron Jones

MTS. YOUNG and HALE
August 11-12, 1979
Jones/Ruser

This trip was advertised as a long hard weekend with more than 7500 feet elevation gain. Friday night's weather was rainy with low overcast. Despite the weather, ten people showed up to meet Gordon and me. Gordon had recently returned to Southern California from work in Illinois.

We waited until 9:30 and the gentle rain showed no sign of getting worse so we set out for Iceberg Lake. About noon we reached 10,800 feet and met descending hikers reporting snow flurries above Upper Boy Scout Lake. At this point we aborted the climb. There was too much Rain and Hail. I will lead this trip again in September 1980.

Nine of the ten participants opted to try the "sunny" Panamints for a consolation climb so we drove to Mahogany Flats Saturday night. Sunday we hiked up the trail to Telescope Peak with nary a view into either Death Valley or Panamint Valley. The entire ridge and summit were in clouds. Rich Gnagy had driven down from Sacramento and chose to climb in the Southern Sierra this day.

Ron Jones
CLIMBING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Czechoslovakia's High Tatras, basically a complex of ridges running primarily in almost every direction, rise immediately out of the plains near Poprad and end almost as quickly. This abruptness just about eliminates gentle slopes, sharpens the ridges, and generates a fine climbing environment, with routes to the fifty plus peaks in this national park varying from two to high five. Mout Gerlach, the country high point, is typical. It comes in at a merciful 8500 ft. or so, with one class two route - but only after ascending a tight, exposed 250 ft. chute with the help of a fixed chain (it's not for everyone) - several three and four routes, including the standard (for the High Tatras) ridge route - a tough four. The routes are mostly over good rock; gains are variable, of course, but a 5000 ft. day isn't too hard to come by.

The popular starting points are from any one of several mountain huts (more like hostels - manegment, reservations normally required, no food because all supplies are backpacked in, but a variety of liquid refreshments including excellent Czechoslovakian rum). These huts are subjected to tremendous pressure not only from the Czechs and Slovaks, but also from the East Germans and Poles, for all of whom the High Tatras are about the only game in town.

Certainly these mountains can't compare with the Alps for grandeur, or the Sierras for wilderness, or probably some other places for some other reasons, so why then? The climbing is good, but more than that, the High Tatras are an invigorating enhancement to a potentially stimulating visit to a fine country. Czechoslovakia is a gold star country for the traveler because the people make it so. The Czechs and Slovaks are among Europe's best, warm to the point that the heat can be felt through a brick wall, hospitable to the extent that they are dangerous to the liver, and totally responsive in a country where the lack of a triple-jointed tongue makes communications a disaster area.

The only regulation that gave us any kind of a problem during our five week stay was that one requiring proof of membership in a climbing club before one could get a High Tatra climbing permit. Probably a Sierra Club card would do the job. We didn't have anything like that, but got the necessary permit with the help of an English speaking pole and the standard cooperative Slovak.

AUGUST 23-24

M. Mt Tom (13,652') A small group for this private climb.
Possibility of doing Basin Mtn. (13,240') for those interested.
Send SAGE to Leader: Eivor Nilsson

WHAT A CLEAR UNSPOILED STREAM!...YOU CAN READ THE LABELS ON THE BEER CANS!
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