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JANUARY MEETING

Wednesday

January 17th, 7:30

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets
Downtown Anchorage

Presentation: Nick Parker will discuss
avalanche safety for mountaineers.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

- Jan 21 Ice Climbing Instruction Day
Learn technique on waterfalls at Five Fingers, Portage Lake. Contact leader for gear list. Need to know technical rope handling, belaying, rappelling, etc.
Leader: Dave Hart 274-4423
- Apr 20- May 5 Grand Canyon & Havasupai
As of Dec 95, the trip is full, but this could change. Bill Wakeland will be out of state until March 4, so contact Don Hansen at 243-7184.
Leader: Bill Wakeland

TRIP REPORTS

Bold Peak Ridge

by Matthew Nedom



lying through the Chugach mountains I first saw Bold Peak rising high above Eklutna Lake years ago. "Someday," I thought to myself, or maybe out loud to my passengers. Sure, I'd hiked along the Eklutna road and into the hills since then, but after seeing Saylor's slide show in October, now I had to go explore the mountain.

On the first of November, John and I brought our bikes to the trailhead and started out past all the warnings of washouts after the summer rains. The first stream crossing over the still standing bridge

was easy; the second was a 2x4 and a 2x6 spanning the creek, flexing into the water under my weight as I carried my bike. After that the trail rode easily until we reached Bold Creek and a giant washout. And no bridge. Being ahead, John picked a line of rocks to step across while carrying his bike and ended up slipping off one and soaking his foot. I followed, hoping not to also slip, and actually did a very smooth job!

We found the trail climbing up the Bold Creek valley and continued riding. Coming down will be much easier we both said between breaths, I thought I was in shape. I stashed my bike off the trail first, John his, shortly thereafter. The trees were closing in, hiding our view of the sky and the lake, but we could still hear the creek roaring below us. At every clearing we looked out at the lake and across the valley for animals on the far hillside. And we kept our eyes open for animals on the trail ahead! Fresh moose, squirrel, and ptarmigan tracks dotted the dirt trails.

Where is the snow? What month is this? When does the sun set? How much further? The trail was petering out so we began picking our way, finally finding snow at the tree line. I'm tired but let's keep going! How much further? One more ridge! To the top of that hill!

I was in front now, finishing my roll of film with shots of the lake and the peaks around us. Blueberry bushes poked up along the dry portions of the hillside providing tasty though slightly overripe berries. Hmmm! Skiing! Bears would be enjoying this! Bears? I quickly looked around. Hmmm! Skiing! The top is just a bit further. It is getting colder as I stand here underdressed in my cotton pants with snow and ice caked onto the legs. Hmmm. My gaiters are sitting in my drawer at home. Let's do it! We drank some water and continued to the top.

The view from the top was worth all the efforts. The sky was clear and the sun beginning to set behind the western peaks. Looking around we still saw no animals but we did spot a cairn of some sort further up the ridge. (It is a ranger's radio repeater station.) The Talkeetnas and Twins Peaks rose to the north, a couple of ridges to the east hid Knik Glacier, and to the south the Mitre, Benign, and Eklutna Glacier. And Bold Peak, rising a few thousand feet above us. We studied the ridge lines for a summit approach. A camp could be set up here I thought, for next time. Now it was time to head home.

Down was a lot quicker. Glissading where we could, we mostly post holed in the wet snow, it caking to my pants. Finding the trail was nice after climbing

over and around trees and bushes once out of the snow. Finally to our bikes, we rode our brakes down to the creek.

Dusk had arrived. John was downstream this time looking to cross at the wider, shallower mouth. Riding across he smacked a tree and laughed, "Look out for that tree!" I hesitated, picked a line, then rode out, only too slowly. Stalling in the middle, my front tire turned and I went down, falling in slow motion, catching myself with my hand, soaking my legs. I jumped right up and waded the short distance in the ankle-deep water to the shore. We laughed and headed on, though we both knew I would be getting cold. At the first rock I stopped to sit and pull off my boots and pour out the water, then my pants to wring them out. I noticed the damp material was beginning to freeze after I put them on. I'm glad we were on our way out and it wasn't too cold! Still, the wind was a bit chilly as I rode back dressed now in all my clothes. I enjoyed the speed of riding though as it was getting dark. I wanted to get back to the van and its heater.

The quarter moon rising right above Bold Peak cast a bright glow across the mountains and the lake. The Big Dipper shined straight ahead arcing down to show Arcturus just above the mountains. Of course I was out of film by then but its beauty will always be in my memory. And plans for going back.

Baltic/Spoon Valley

by Wayne Todd



On June 6, Tom Choate, James Larabee, Ken Zafren and I flew in with Mike Meekin to the 'Spoon Valley' (one at a time in a super cub). Our original destination was the Scandinavian Peaks but it was 'between seasons' regarding aircraft landings. Upon Mike's recommendation, and not having many other options, we decided to climb out of Spoon Valley. This valley is about seven miles north of the Scandinavians.

There is a small 'landing strip?' and hunters hut in the valley. The hut is a small, very adequate shelter for two to four people. It was a nice upgrade from basing out of a tent. The problem with the hut is that the abundant ground squirrel population uses it as a food source. Initially we made serious and valiant efforts to 'dissuade' the squirrels but by the end of the trip we simply accepted them. Tom and I managed to get the only two cots simply because we fit the best (sounded good at the time).

We were all in the valley by noon and were headed out to climb the 'Fork' shortly thereafter (6670' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S2) . The climb was non-technical and involved some scree, some scrambling and some post-holing. The weather was questionable this day but we received no precipitation. We were back in camp about 7:30 P.M. (All the peaks climbed on this trip were first ascents except for Fog. We named the peaks as we climbed them, hence the name 'Fork' of the Spoon Valley.)

The next day (June 7th) we climbed the 'Knife' (6840' Anchorage C-2, T19N, R11E, S21). This climb was similar to the Fork except there was a bit more snow and the weather was poorer. June 8th we climbed 'Potentilla' (6650' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S7). This too was similar climbing except it was of longer duration, involved minor bush whacking and stream crossings, and the weather was great. We had incredible views of Mt. Wickersham, Mt. Sgt. Robinson and beautiful blue water ponds on the Matanuska Glacier. (Potentilla is a small flower that was common on this peak) June 9th we climbed Lithuania (8590' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S24). We eventually had great weather this day too and also had spectacular views of the Scandinavian peaks and more. This was about a twelve hour day. (This peak was previously named). Somewhere about this time both the mosquitoes and the squirrels were getting more prevalent (too bad squirrels don't eat mosquitoes).

June 10th James and I climbed 6850' (Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S8) under cloudless skies. Our destination was 7740' (Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S17) but we made an intelligent decision to turn around at 7300' because of a long ridge of technical gendarmes. We did a very thorough job of clearing the unstable snow on the west face of the slope by throwing large rocks (this is at least as much fun as trundling).

June 11th James and I climbed Estonia under cloudless and almost windless skies (it actually got hot this day) (8302' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S14). This was also a twelve hour day but it could have been much shorter with different route selection. I don't recall being in a hurry though with the stupendous weather, endless light and incredible vistas. (This peak was also previously named). Ken and Tom were flown out this morning because of work and a foot injury, respectively.

June 12th we climbed the 'Hut' (3500' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S24). O.K. O.K., we took a rest day under cloudless skies (sacrilege). I awoke from a nap to find a wolf watching me from about 75 yards

away . I hoped he wasn't that hungry. I also received a mild sunburn (boy life's tough sometimes). June 13th we climbed Fog peak, again under ideal conditions (8555' Anchorage C-2, T18N, R11E, S20). The views from the ridge route were almost as incredible as from the summit (Scandinavian Peaks, Marcus Baker, Matanuska Glacier and the peaks previously climbed). It's a rough day when you can hang out on an 8500' summit for two hours with just pants and a shirt on.

When we arrived in the valley it was brown and seemed void of life. By the time of our departure however, spring had arrived and the valley was bursting with greenery.

June 14th we were packed and ready to be flown out early in the morning . We hopped out of the hut into.....(what was the name of the peak climbed yesterday?) I think it was a peak curse. We were flown out that evening and it's a good thing as I was really getting tired of bagels and all that fabulous weather, and climbing , and good times, and.....

