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A CAMPOUT ON MT ALYESKA

MARCH 21/22



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the exertion of trying to stay upright under the pack and on top of the skis. I'm sure that the old fashioned cable harness works better with such sloppy boots.

By lunchtime we were back at the lodge and hot tea - while more snow fell onto the slopes above.

SKI TOUR TO HATCHER PASS

March 22

Marge Prescott

Sunday was anything but a good day, despite that five people, myself, Ruth Schmidt, the Mann's and a friend gathered at the Bocksthaler's early that morning. After coffee we were on our way hoping for an improvement in the weather, but at Independence it was still snowing. After more coffee and doughnuts we ventured off into the white-out. We traversed the slopes to the valley leading to Hatcher Pass. After some discussion and map consulting we decided this was the right valley. We fastened on climbing skins and headed upwards. The white-out prevented us from seeing very far. Kokluk (Bocksthaler's Husky) wandered about exploring many unseen things, but when the snow got too deep peoples skis were excellent things to walk on, But unfortunately from his point of view, a stop was put to this. As we approached the pass the wind velocity increased and it got colder. In minutes ski tracks were obliterated.

We eat our lunch on a steep incline on the west side of Hatcher Pass. Kokluk burrowed into the snow finding protection from the wind. He didn't seem any happier about the wind than we did.

Removing skins we turned back. The top of the pass would make an excellent run in deep powder snow, like in the movies. However, no one could get up any speed because of the white-out. Part way down we found ourselves in a gully which we hadn't seen until we were well into it.

Had it been clear with good visibility it would have been an excellent run to the valley floor in that deep powder snow.

Driving the cars down from Independence mine presented more of a problem than the ski tour. Ruth and Betty had to walk ahead of Tony's car in order for him to see the road. There was no contrast and it was next to impossible to distinguish road from snowbank.

MAUNA KEA AND MAUNA LOA

By Vin Hoeman

It's not nearly as much fun to be paid to climb a mountain as it is to climb one that involves sacrifice, but the mountains remain the same and are worth describing. Hawaii, our sister state to the south, has little in common with us save a common share in the Pacific, but she is attentive when the northland shivers because the Pacific will sometimes belie its name and roll ashore.

Mauna Kea on the "big island" of Hawaii is the highest point in the whole central Pacific at 13,796. Like every other Hawaiian prominence, it is volcano, but it has not been active within the memory of man. Its highest area is a group of cinder cones in the craters of which it was rumored that the dark-rumped petrel, a sea bird, nested. My job in the central Pacific concerns sea birds, and so when I heard these rumors I agitated to check them out. Finally I was sent to

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the big island for a week with one assistant. In mid-April there was only a faint trail to the summit of Mauna Kea, but it was so vulnerable that by the end of the month a road will be completed to the summit, since a Dr Eyer has a NASA grant to put an observatory on top. I was able to beat the bulldozer by a few days. I would like to have walked from sea level, but my assistant wanted to jeep to the summit in advance of the road, so we compromise and left our rented vehicle at 8800. Timberline is about 9500 and there is very little vegetation above that. My partner hitched a ride in a construction foreman's jeep while I continued treading cinders. My wind was bad after months at sea level, but his was worse and I beat him to the summit by an hour. Just a simple cairn and sticks with a coffee can register dating back to 1961. Bruce R. Gilbert was there that year; now a Talkietna school teacher, he did Denali in 1960 wearing plain uninsulated leather boots. A drift of snow capped the crater rim and my thermometer dipped to 39°F. Finding the birds was complicated by the fact that they only come to land after dark and we did not find them on top, but four nights later we were gratified to hear them in courtship flight over a subsidiary crater at 10,000.

If you ask a Hawaiian what is the highest mountain in the world, he will say Mauna Loa (notwithstanding Mauna Kea is higher) because it rises 31,000 feet from the ocean floor. Its mass occupies most of the island, a great dome of lava with many dated flows from the huge crater on top and vents in the sides including Kilauea Crater. A fair road leads to a weather station at 11,150, but above there it would have been easier to walk than to climb our jeep over loose cinders, jagged "aa" and wrinkled "pahoehoe" lava as we did on a dozer track that ends half a mile from the 13,680 summit where a few scraps of paper in a rusty condensed milk can dated back to 1957. Intermittently it rained, sleeted and snowed as we waited in vain here 19° north of the equator for the clouds to clear. An eruption might have jarred my dreams from the real mountains back home in Alaska, but all was quiet and I'm dreaming still.

The ancient Hawaiians feared the mountains as the abode of the fire goddess, Pele, but the modern inhabitants have no respect for them at all. They litter every summit with instruments of war and communications, roads and navigation. You can't buy a picture postcard of a mountain, there are none! Mountaineers they respect even less as they post their trash-cluttered summits with signs saying "KAPU" (Hawaiian for keep-out). I prefer peaks that demand respect from those who venture near them.

ANG NEWS

Rescue Training Session June 7: Meet at 8:00AM Alaska Village laundromat DeBar & Muldoon road. The training session will be held on the road to Basher. Participants will qualify for the ARS patch. The new radios will be available. There will be a picnic afterwards for those not wishing to attend the training session. A map will be available at the MCA meeting.

The Lionel Turray movie netted ARS \$275.00.