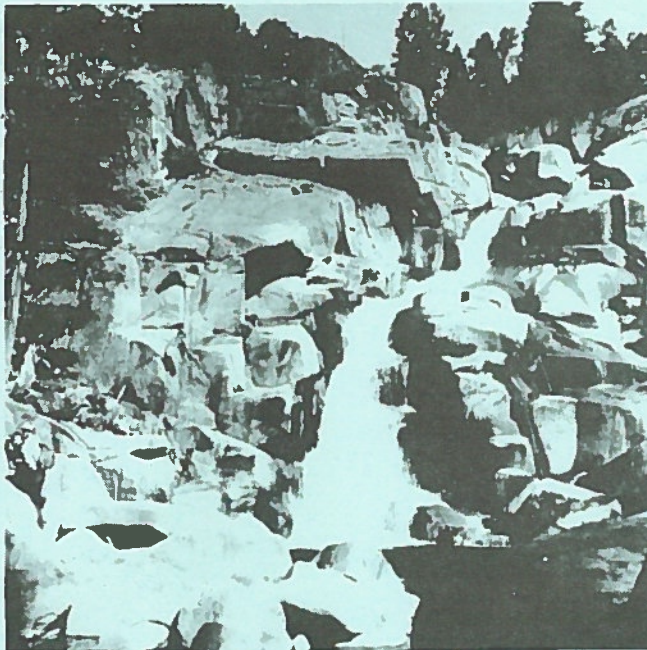


Snow Job

Vol. 5, No. 5

North Lake Tahoe

February 1985



Juncture of 5 Lakes Creek & Rubicon River, near where victim of recent Squaw search was rescued.

SITUATION IN DESOLATION

Sunday, January 13, was an unlucky day for two Bay Area ski tourists who became separated from their guide on a loop from Echo Lakes up to Lake Aloha, around past Heather and Susie Lakes and out at Fallen Leaf.

Skiing past their guide and another friend, the two speed demons missed the route and mistakenly crossed Mosquito Pass into Rockbound Valley. Forced to spend the night, they used a space blanket and their skis as insulation, and shared body heat till dawn, keeping an eye on the lights of South Lake Tahoe to stay oriented. Weather was calm, but cold.

El Dorado County officials were on the verge of sending out ground searchers and a helicopter when they were contacted by the two men who had emerged at Eagle Falls and hitchhiked to a telephone at Camp Richardson.

Meanwhile, their guide had not much more fun as he broke a ski by Heather Lake and hobbled out late Sunday night, only to spend many of the ensuing hours consulting with El Dorado County sheriffs concerning his friends' whereabouts.

HAPPY ENDING TO SQUAW SEARCH

Sunday night January 20 at 7 PM the call went out: skier lost at Squaw. An eight-member TNSAR team met at the tram building by 8:30 and were transported up to the ridgetops, where they split up and skied the various drainages, including Shirley Canyon, Whiskey Creek, Five Lakes Creek, and others.

They were looking for a 29 year old visitor from Lafayette, who had become separated from his wife during the day. Both were intermediate-level skiers, unfamiliar with the mountain, and she had no idea where they'd been skiing.

Snowmobiles from Squaw Valley spotted a set of fresh tracks leading down Five Lakes Creek, and followed them as far as they could until brush intervened. Six TNSAR searchers then took over, under the command of Sgt. Dave Dennis from the Placer County Sheriff's Office and TNSAR coordinator Mike Wolterbeek. Snow conditions were pretty poor, according to one searcher.

The skier's tracks continued down the creek, crossing it several times. About a mile before the confluence of Five Lakes Creek and the Rubicon River, at around 7 AM, lead searcher Doug Read roused a sleepy California black bear, who blundered out of the dark and set the searchers to yelling with enthusiasm. Their cries were answered by the lost skier, atop a nearby knoll, warming himself by a fire. Hatless and clad in cotton khaki trousers and a light down jacket, he was nevertheless fairly comfortable and uninjured. Rescuers and rescuee were airlifted out of the backcountry that morning.

Thanks to volunteer searchers Read, Charlie Kellermeyer, John Harding, David Waite, Randy Osterhuber, Scott Schroepfer, Jim Meskimen, and Don Ahlert.

VALENTINE'S DAY FUNDRAISER

February 14 is a Thursday this year, and that night from 8 till midnight the inevitable Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Valentine's Day Ball will rock and roll at Gatsby's, below the Lighthouse Center in Tahoe City. Thrill to the antics of the band Headliners and your favorite local SAR hoodlums. Savory foodstuffs will be catered by the Food Committee and a Grand Prize raffle will bestow upon some lucky individual a night at the Fantasy Inn III. All this for \$5 in advance/\$6 at the door, with all proceeds above expenses going to benefit the team. Don't miss it. For some people, it's the only time they'll get out all winter.

SOME MORE GOOD TRAININGS

We're fortunate enough, thanks to the good offices of Bob Moore, to have arranged for the services of Norm Wilson, internationally-recognized avalanche expert. Norm is one of the originals who developed modern avalanche control methods, and he's currently working as a consultant and living outside of Truckee.

We'll meet on Saturday, February 23, 8:30 AM at Donner Spitz Inn atop Old Highway 40 (right where they stop plowing). Access is via I-80, take the Soda Springs exit, turn left and go the end. The training will take place in the Mt. Judah-Donner Mtn. area, known for its multitude of slide paths.

Topics covered will be avalanche & terrain recognition, route selection, snow crystal identification, and pit digging — possibly more. This is a training for advanced or strong intermediate skiers only, as Norm will "go for it" regardless of snow or weather conditions. Metal-edged skis are highly recommended and BRING THOSE SKADIS!!

We anticipate having room for 20 skiers. Sign up at the general meeting on February 4, when details on parking arrangements will be discussed as well.



NORTHSTAR TOUR

Thursday, January 10, nine TNSAR skiers took a tour of Northstar's backside. Accompanied by four Northstar patrol members, who donned skinny skis for the occasion, members skied various routes adjacent to the new Schaffer's Camp triple chair, ending one run on the Great Ski Race trail, overlooking the Deer Creek drainage, and another time crossing over to Watson Lake.

The group lunched atop Mt. Watson and then crossed back down and around Mt. Pluto, across the dam at Sawmill Flat Reservoir, and back into Northstar via the area's East Ridge.

Mountain Operations Manager Phred Stoner also gave a "chalk talk" on Northstar's history of rescue operations, and attempted to explain the network of logging roads surrounding the resort.

Thanks to Northstar's management and staff for making this educational opportunity possible.

Thursday, February 14, we'll be touring Sugar Bowl Ski Area on Donner Summit. Meet at 9:00 AM in the Sugar Bowl parking lot, ready to go. There will be a talk by the patrol, and we'll ski around to get the lay of the land and learn about past search experiences there. Bring a light pack. Advance signups are necessary — do so at the February 4 meeting or call Scott Schroepfer at 546-3216.

THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING

...IS ON Monday night, February 4, 7:30 PM at Granlibakken. Time to discuss the Valentine's Day Ball, and debrief the stalwart searchers on their Squaw Valley-Hell Hole run. Members of the Education Committee are also scheduled to perform a short "survival skit" such as they are presenting in the local elementary and intermediate schools. Don't miss this rare cultural event!



MARCH MEETING HELD IN FEBRUARY

Remember, the traditional March general TNSAR membership meeting is to be held on Monday night, February 25. This to allow up-to-the-minute planning for the Great Ski Race.



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 ENERGY Maxwell House, good to the last drop

Structural analysis

There are four intrinsic axes of a snow crystal
 Three A axes in the basal plane
 one C axis perpendicular to the basal plane.

High supersaturation creates increased complexity,
 the plates develop dendritic growth.
 These scientific schemes intrigue.

Fortunately,
 they detract nothing from
 a single flake caught upon a cold dark glove.

— Richard Waller

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