

Low impact message, continued...

on a trip. For this reason, mob scenes such as those of the recent Ventana trip, although they represent the current prosperity of the club, will be avoided on future trips into wilderness areas. This decision should be no cause for alarm, for Hiking Club leaders have already sought out and discovered new areas where mob scenes can be accommodated with minimal impact to the surrounding "wilderness" (sites for up to 40 people, in fact).

Nonetheless, due to the informal nature of the club, much of the responsibility for following low impact principles still lies with the individual member. Some of the fundamental principles are listed below. More information on this subject is supplied by the Sierra Club and is available in the Hiking Club office. Future issues of Bear Tracks will also have more information. Please share these fundamentals with fellow members on trips so that we can remain (become?) a respectable and reputable organization.

LOW IMPACT POINTERS for this month:

- Never cut switchbacks on trails
- Never camp within 100ft of streams and lakes
- Don't wash dishes in streams or lakes, carry the water 100ft away from the shore/bank and wash dishes there
- Pack out what you pack in
- Bury and burn used T.P.
- Use caution not to trample campsites excessively
- Do not spit, swear or make obscene gestures in wilderness areas
- Bears can *smell* sex

Ask an officer if you would like more information on this subject, or if you can contribute any material for future issues.

Film Message

If you wish to take pictures for the Hiking Club photo library, please remember:

- WE buy the film
- WE develop the film
- WE keep the film

In other words, do not buy film and expect to get reimbursed later. Talk to Joe to get or develop rolls of film.

Equipment Rental Mess (Help Avoid It!)

Lately members (and some non-members) have become slack in returning equipment on time. First of all, non-members are not technically allowed to use club gear. If you are not a member and you have used club gear in the past, then you are obligated to become a member at once (its only \$3 for crying out loud!) In the future, officers should only rent to members, and said officers should clip the membership card to the rental form to confirm that renters are members. Second of all, if you rent a piece of equipment and then keep it at your house for two weeks, then obviously no one else has access to that piece of equipment, which defeats the purpose of having it in the first place. With the increased number of trips happening, and with the increased number of people going on trips, the problem of missing equipment has become acute. The problem is complicated further by the fact we try to maintain an informal atmosphere in the club. We don't want to turn to our friends and new acquaintances and slap them with a line that sounds like it comes straight from Sproul Hall, like, "Return this on time or we'll block your registration." (Bet you thought we couldn't do that!) So, in the future let us all adopt a more professional approach to taking equipment from the club, and that especially includes people who consider themselves to be in the "core group." And on that note, let us all be prepared to give \$5 in cash per item as a deposit that will be kept if you don't return your gear on time!

For Sale

One Heavenly Valley lift pass, good any day thru May 1. \$25. For information call Rex, 527-1083.

Continued from front page...

his superior brain and had a flash about some hot springs somewhere near here. So we gathered at KFC for our last real meal and headed for the springs.

A full moon shone brightly through the clear sky as we trudged on a death hike through a nowhere land looking for hot springs that had obviously misplaced themselves sometime earlier. They must have known we were coming. As each of us began to lose hope of ever fathering children we could hear DESOLATION DAVE say, "I think the hot springs are just over the next ridge." After four miles and tens or maybe hundreds of ridges, we made camp in the middle of a cow pasture next to an empty stockade.

In keeping with tradition, we made a definite effort to get a late start. I'm not sure when the first signs of life showed through the doors of the tents. But it was well into the afternoon before we managed to mount onto our skis and head back on the trail of death. By nightfall, we were ready to start the new day. This time it was to a cabin that only Granola Mike knew about. With great fear that the cabin had also misplaced itself somewhere over the "next ridge," we set out on another midnight ski. To our great joy, the cabin had not been warned of our arrival and had not had time to hide. It was an old two room cabin with boarded over windows and a 55 gallon drum for a furnace. What a heavenly delight.

The next day held a full day of community activities. There was the "break the big log with a big rock" contest and the Pro-Cro Snow Bowl. That is bowling for sticks in a snowy lane. Ask Dave about the automatic ball return. And of course, a little cross country skiing.

The next day, we wandered through a ghost town by the name of Bodie. In 1880 the town was the home to over 10,000 people and a lot of bad guys. They say that somebody was shot there almost every day, just like a Clint Eastwood movie. "Save my soul. I'm going to Bodie."

The last day of our trip fell upon us in a rather disastrous way. We had made our usual late start and loaded into the cars about noon. The snow was falling heavily as DESOLATION DAVE was screaming "CAN WE GO NOW?" It was obvious we were in for a rough ride. At this point, we found out that Oliver had forgotten his tire chains. Well, strike up another \$70 bill for Oliver. We trudged through thick heavy snow in a blind blizzard at a speed of 20 miles an hour, stopping every so often to repair Mike's failing tire cables. But never fear, the highway patrol are always around to help. We found one standing in the middle of the road as we crested the top of the hill. He wanted us to stop and put on our chains, but it was too late. Startled by a CHIP waving his arm in the middle of the road in the middle of a blizzard, Mike lost control of the super bug. We slid to the left. We slid to the right. We slid back to the left. We slid back to the right and this time we were headed for the ditch. But never fear, Oliver with his cunning skills rammed us at full warp speed and knocked us straight. We gained control and pulled off to the side of the road. Needless to say, Oliver was nose first in the ditch. Strike up another \$60 bill for Oliver!

"CAN WE GO NOW?" and off we went back to Berkeley. We wanted to make it back kind of late but it was definitely early. Early morning, that is. About 4 o'clock in the morning.

So remember, when you want to add a little adventure into your life, call DESOLATION DAVE and be sure to warn the hot springs.



THE DEATH BY AVALANCHE TRIP,

DEC. 27-30

RING RING RING

"Hello?"

"Hey Don, this is DESOLATION DAVE. Feel like taking a death hike to nowhere, losing your toes to frostbite, and dying in an avalanche?"

"Sure, when?"

"Real early tomorrow. So get down to Astro-Mike's tonight."

"Great, anything else?"

"Yeah, YOU'RE GONNA DIE!"

So, with the greatest of speed I packed my stuff, dropped a new battery into my car, rented skis, and was off. Needless to say, we got off to a rather late start the next day. The "Death By Avalanche" crew consisted of DESOLATION DAVE, ASTRO-MIKE, DANGEROUS DON, and GRANOLA MIKE.

On the first night, we hiked a few hundred feet up the side of the mountain behind the general store in Twin Bridges (pop. 10) just as the sun set. This was against the wishes of our fearless leader, DESOLATION DAVE, who wanted to hike the entire mountain by moonlight. Mike read to us from his hiking book, "This trail is one of the most dangerous trails in the Sierras. Many people have fallen to their deaths here in the summer." I wondered to myself, what the hell am I doing here in the winter? A small voice in the back of my mind began to repeat over and over "YOU'RE GONNA DIE!"

As we hiked that night, a song kept running through my head. It went like this:

Don's going home in a body bag. DOO DAH DOO DAH

Don's going home in a body bag. AH THE DOO DAH DAY

The avalanche, it let go.

He's buried in the snow.

Don's going home in a freezer bag. AH THE DOO DAH DAY

The sun was shining bright the next day as we climbed our way to the top of the ridge. And what a climb it was! I had it easy. I had Dave's skins on. For those who haven't tried skins, they are wonderful!!

After reaching the top of the ridge, we began to cut across the side of the mountain to the head of the canyon. It was time to worry about avalanches. We were cutting across very steep wide open slopes with 8 - 10 feet of snow on them. Something in the back of my mind was murmuring, "YOU'RE GONNA DIE!"

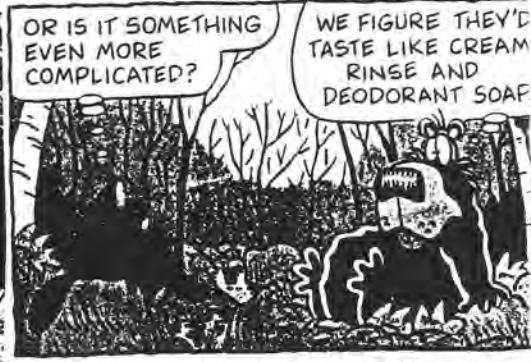
We made camp as the sun set and a blizzard pushed into the area. The winds were blowing with gusts of 50-60 mph. You could hardly see at times due to all the snow. We took refuge in a small clump of trees and began to build a five foot high snow wall around our two tents. At this point, that voice was yelling, "YOU'RE GONNA DIE!"

We completed the walls and I began to cook dinner. A yummy concoction of rice and soup mix. Dinner was served in the tents, and we all settled down to sleep. As we laid in bed, an interesting subject arose. "What does an avalanche sound like?"

As I slipped into a light slumber, a little voice coaxed me to sleep with the phrase, "YOU'RE GONNA DIE!"

Morning came, and the sun broke through to see our tents buried in the snow. We packed up and headed down the mountain. This turned out to be much trickier than planned. We got off course and found ourselves at the edge of a cliff. Finally we reached the last leg of the hike. It was the last descent down mostly open mountainside. This was what we came for. It's time to ski like madmen down the slopes with our packs strapped to our backs. Unfortunately, the snow was of a hellish kind that would trip you with every chance. I found myself skiing 10 feet, falling 20 feet, and rolling another 20 feet. I must have fallen 50 times trying to descend this slope. My pack suffered two broken pins and two torn straps. Dave broke his ski pole.

As we climbed back into our cars, we swore we would never go cross back skiing again. But we knew we would for one simple reason. On snow trips like this, there is always "NO BITCHES." (Editor's Note: He's wrong.)



And now we pick up a favorite program ...*Sykes Stories!*

...But when the two groups had finished discussing their plans, it appeared that there was a *third* alternative. No longer would people blindly follow those who knew not what they were doing. Nay! People could know not themselves and blindly follow other blind followers into the depths of the Ventana Wilderness and the far reaches of their very own souls - indeed to the nether regions of Hell itself with little hope of returning and ever beholding the clear blue sky once again.

So, not even considering what horrors lie ahead, the brave threesome, Bernadette, Tessa, and Astromike, venture off. In a flash they cross the stream and are in the Red camp where they are confronted by the evil guardians of the Red group: "Where are you headed?" Mightymike asks. "We're all going straight to hell," Astromike prophetically replies. *If only he had knocked on wood!* The three would never be the same again.

Scene I [wherein the M and M symbolizes fleeting earthly pleasures]:

Somewhere along the stream the group relaxes in the sun. Mike makes a strategic mistake by being on the other side of the stream when Tessa opens the bag of gorp. Realizing that Bernadette is fast closing in on the M and Ms he shouts across the roaring river, demanding at least one M and M. In an instant Tessa launches a perfect M and M trajectory across the river. The sight of the M and M in a perfect parabola high above the turbulent waters would have made even a shell-shocked old Ballistics Officer proud. Right on target the M and M falls deep into Mike's throat and is never seen again. He is happy. *For now.*

Scene II [where the River Styx is crossed and Tessa plays the role of Charon]:

The sun, luring the foolish group further and further from their safe and happy camp, continues to shine brightly. Further up stream the group appears stuck between a rock and a wet place. The only possible route is to cross an eight foot wide pool of swirling water and clamber onto a treacherous, moss-covered rock. Not at all daunted, Tessa tears a tree from the ground, flings it between the two rocks and skips across. Bernadette and Mike stare at each other in disbelief. "How could we hope to equal that feat or even cross the raging river?" they think to themselves. *Fade out. Somehow the rest of the group has crossed with Tessa. They are now trying to pull themselves up along the moss-covered rock.* Bernadette is only inches above the river - hanging on only by Mike's outstretched hand. Mike in turn is hanging onto Tessa who is holding a clump of grass. The clump of grass rips. The group somehow avoids being sucked down the river and thrown onto the jagged rocks beneath the waterfall. The river god is disappointed. *For now.*

Scene III [wherein it is thought to be too late to repent sins past]:

Having left the river and climbed too high and almost fallen to their deaths several times, the intrepid group seeks a way down. A way out of Hell. But to no avail. They meet other lost travelers - ghosts of hikers who had foolishly tried to backpack through hell and never returned. These ghosts relate bad news: There is no way down the mountain! All paths lead to cliffs and certain death! Undaunted, the group seeks a new passage out of Hell. But little do they know, to leave hell they must first face Satan himself. But they have hope. *For*

now.

Scene IV [wherein the Devil exhibits himself in the form of Gravity]:

The group is walking/falling/tripping down a loose rock slide when the entire ground under Bernadette gives way. She is left holding only a frail limb on an outstretched tree. Beneath her the rocks tumble away to the river. Above her Satan smiles knowingly. And beside her Tessa and Mike are about to face *The Grim Reaper*. Tessa climbs a rock, Mike close behind, when suddenly the entire rock Tessa is on shakes loose and careens off the edge. A boulder the size of a small Volkswagen goes crashing to the ground right beside where Mike is standing. All three stare in horror and relive the sound of the sickening thud of the boulder smashing into moss - the sickening thud that could have easily been the sound of mangled flesh compressing under a two ton boulder. They are happy that they are safe. *For now.*

Scene V [wherein it is shown that escape from Hell is impossible]:

Final scene. The weary and blood-stained group stumbles back to camp, jubilant to still be alive and eager to rest in the hot springs. They trek to the springs, the smell of sulfur reeks in the air about them. They slip their tired bodies into the bubbling caldron and are happy because they think they have escaped from Hell. *For Now.*

Editor's Note: Not all stories were turned in on time for this printing (Let that be a lesson to turn in stories on time!) Stories can be turned in to Sandy or Rex any time.

Night Hike Up Mount Tam

It was a dark and stormy night—well, not really...but it was foggy. A rather large group of hiking people gathered at the West University Avenue entrance to campus February 11. About 17 of us pile into cars and trucks—I happened to have the experience of a lifetime and a ride in the creaking back of Jen's wonder-truck. After one or two (or three or four) wrong turns—due of course to wonderfully typical Hiking Club directions—everyone convened at the base of the trail up Mount Tamalpais. The hike itself was fairly easy—tromping and sloshing through the mud puddles was a highlight of the evening. The walk up was a great time to meet and talk with new members, or get better acquainted with old ones. We finally make it to the top, climbing always higher into the foggy mist. When you could see through the fog, the view was incredible. The sky was very clear, and the 1/4 moon was just as good as a full one (in my opinion). From the summit, the lights of the city below us faded on and off “just like they're on a dimmer switch”—to quote some Hiking Clubbers. We all sat huddled in a group at the top—glad for whatever warm clothing we may have been smart enough to bring to keep out the chill wind. We shared whatever food and drink we had—bananas, banana bread, cookies, chips, oranges, tangerines, dried apples, crackers, cheese, wine and peppermint Schnapps. Surprisingly, there was more than enough food to go around, although after sitting for so long, hot chocolate would have been wonderful. The trek back down went very quickly. We sang silly songs and were generally obnoxious (what's new?). Maybe we'll see some of those great tunes in Glenn's long-awaited songbook. After the hike, everyone was invited to Tracy's for a sleepover. I heard it was really fun (but I sniff couldn't sniff be there sniff sniff.)

That's all for now but stay tuned for more Hiking Club news and adventures—same bat time, same bat channel...

—Terri Sullivan

Bonafide Dayhike
(Sykes to Mocho by river)
Sean, Mark, and Mike Bones

Bonafide trail - Two animals having passed that way, or 2" wide and 6' long.

Mostly safe - Containing many safe points.

Mostly downhill - Not all downhill.

We set off up the creek about 9:45 and after 17 stream crossings found a huge redwood across the stream (7ft dbh). At crossing 26 we came to a beautiful box canyon-waterfall. It took us about 1/2 hour to maneuver some mostly safe cliffs* and get around it. Mark the Jr. Sr. Member found a shovel blade and declared it the official souvenir. We carried it another 23 crossings up to Mocho Camp. We have to say this "shortcut" can not be recommended for those who have heart trouble or bad ankles. From Mocho camp it was a 10 mile walk through several nice redwood camps. We played predator-prey on the downhills, which sped up the return trip. Mark said Sean was a bonafide liar because he had severely understated the trip distance and the danger and the possibility of spending the night on the trail. Coincidentally, Mark showed the wisdom of his age by correctly guessing that it would take exactly 45 crossings to get to Mocho.

*with several bonafide trails

P.S. Matt inspired this madness but was too smart to go along.

The Mike Song

(to the tune of "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer")

We've got Pseudo and 'Nola
and Bio and Astro,
Mighty and Anthro and 'Lectro and
who knows,

But do you recall...
Which face to which nickname, at all?...

Chorus: Let's hope you don't get too lost
Making sense of all these Mikes
It is a skill most needed
'Specially on a trip to Sykes

With so many Mikes a-round you,
You'd never want to say the name
'Less you need the help of many
or want to start a football game.

On some foggy coastal hike,
you'll find yourself in need...
What's the name you should call out?
Just say, "Mike," you won't have to shout.

They'll be a crowd approaching...
To fill your little heart with glee
The huge amount of Mikes in this club
Will go down in history!!

(repeat and fade)

HAVE A GOOD BREAK!!

WRITE STORIES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!