

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

TALUS PILE, no. 136, December 2005

TRAINING SCHEDULE

2-4 Dec Fri-Sun Open (Flex)
T 7 Dec Wed CPR class First Aid Committee
10-11 Dec Sat-Sun Telescope Peak Huey
T 12 Dec Mon Meeting (Hug-a-Tree replacement) Finco, Doerr, Bishop
16-18 Dec Fri-Sun Open (Flex)
20 Dec Tue Christmas party Westbrook
24-25 Dec Sat-Sun Open (Holiday)
30 Dec-1 Jan Fri-Sun Olancha (Winter snow shoe-long) Huey
7-8 Jan Sat-Sun Open
T 9 Jan Mon Meeting (Avalanche beacon) Rockwell, Rockwell, Roseman
13-16 Jan Fri-Mon Open (Flex & Holiday)
T 21-22 Jan Sat-Sun Desert peak Finco
27-29 Jan Fri-Sun Open (Flex)
4-5 Feb Sat-Sun Open
10-12 Feb Fri-Sun Bradley Bishop
T 13 Feb Mon Meeting Myers, Miles, Brown
T 15 Feb Wed First Aid class First Aid Committee
18, 19, 20 Feb Sat,Sun,Mon Winter recert practice (One day) Training Committee
(Holiday)
20-24 Feb Mon-Fri Pear Lake Hut (Ski trip) Roseman
T 22 Feb Wed First Aid class First Aid Committee
25-26 Feb Sat-Sun Open
T 1 Mar Wed First Aid Topic n First Aid Committee
4 Mar Sat Winter Recertification MRA
T 8 Mar Wed First Aid Topic n First Aid Committee
11-12 Mar Sat-Sun Morgan from McGee Creek
(winter snow shoe-easy) Huey
T designates official training activities. Guests are not allowed to participate in field operations.

OPERATION REPORTS

Operation 2005-02 (Mobilization)

OES-2005-LAW-0170

22 April 2005

Mariposa County

Debbie Breitenstein (OL)

The pager went off on 22 April 2005 at 2230. Sgt. Mike Kirkland stated that there was a call for mutual aid and requested a call back. Tom Roseman returned the call, and I sent out a page to notify the Group that Tom was closing the loop. The search was for Doug Pearse, who was lost in the Fish Camp area near Wawona, California. Little information was available in the initial communications.

At 2240, Carol Burge agreed to be the coordinator, and I agreed to be the leader.

Carol proceeded to call through the list.

Many Group members were out on official travel or other training and recreational trips. By 2330, only Dave Miles had committed in addition to me. I called Dave to discuss the limited team and the implications of the drive. It was 2330 already, the team was requested for 0800, and we thought that the five-hour drive to and from the search with two days of searching would result in hazardous driving because we had no additional drivers to take shifts. We decided that we did not have enough manpower to support this effort and declined the operation. Sgt. Kirkland agreed.

Note: Dan Bishop took a team the following weekend and received more information about the subject and the situation.

Operation 2005-03 (Search)

OES-2005-LAW-0170

29-30 April 2005

Mariposa County

Dan Bishop (OL)

I got the call from Tom Sakai on Friday at 1300 for a search in Mariposa County.

Sakai could not go, so I took the operation and called Sgt. Mike Kirkland. This was a continuation of the search that started after Doug Pearse went missing on 21 April.

The mutual aid request from Mariposa County asked for those responding to be at the Command Post (CP) at 0800 Saturday morning. The CP was located in the Ponderosa Basin Subdivision between the towns of Mariposa and Oakhurst.

Because of the anticipated 5-hour drive, we would need to leave Ridgecrest by 1800.

Sheila Rockwell agreed to be the coordinator and started making the calls. Bob Huey was the only one to commit. We left the Hut at 1815 and arrived at the CP at 2300.

We borrowed a couple of cots from the San Bernardino team (they had 27 members present) and spent the night next to a bubbling stream.

At the briefing the next morning, we learned that the 84-year-old Mr. Pearse's vehicle was found stuck and burned on a rugged dirt roadway at 5600 feet elevation.

Investigation indicated that the fire was caused by a mechanical problem. Further

investigation indicated that Mr. Pearse's mental capacity had appeared to be diminished before the day he went missing.

Our search assignment was bounded by a road and the intersection of two streams about 1 mile from the place last seen. Terry, Dan, and Loren from San Bernardino were added to our team. We were transported to our assignment in four-wheel-drive vehicles because of the rugged and slippery roads. En route, we came upon a Sierra Madre vehicle that had slid off the road and was perched precariously with its front wheels about 4 feet off the ground and its rear bed against a large tree. The driver was OK, and the vehicle was extracted with only a little blemish on its bed.

We started searching about 0930 where we encountered terrain that was moderate (but steep and muddy around the streams) with areas of heavy brush and snow. We completed the assignment without finding anything significant by 1600 and were transported back to be de-briefed. At 1700, the sheriff suspended the search indefinitely. We were on the road by 1730 and back at the Hut at 2230. Al Green served as coordinator for Saturday during the day and passed it on to Terry Mitchell, who wrapped it up that evening. About 93 searchers were in the field on Saturday. Mariposa County ran a well organized search.

Operation 2005-05 (Mobilization)

26 June 2005

Hetch Hetchy

Tom Sakai (OL)

At 1630 on Sunday, June 26, I got a call from Sheila Rockwell, who had responded to a call from

Sgt. Mike Kirkland, Kern County Sheriff's Department (KCSO), with a mutual aid request for assistance on a search for an overdue hiker. The request was from Yosemite National Park (YNP) for the continuing search for Michael Ficery who had been missing for more than a week. He was originally reported missing on June 21, two days after his wilderness permit expired. He was last seen on June 15 on the trail along his planned itinerary. His backpack had been found several days earlier outside his itinerary.

YNP was looking for additional resources to replace tired searchers for one last day of searching. Sheila agreed to coordinate. Only Al Green was able to go. Because our participation would be for just one day, the drive was 6 hours one way, and there were only two of us, I opted not to participate.

Operation 2005-06 (Search)

18-19 July 2005

China Lake

Linda Finco (OL)

Most CLMRG members had heard the news of the two F/A-18 E/F Super Hornets from Lemoore that crashed in a training exercise over the northern ranges of China Lake around noon on Monday, July 18. The resulting wildfire was visible for days. Early reports stated that the two occupants of the F/A-18 F had been rescued and taken to the local hospital. The pilot of the single seater F/A-18 E, however, had not been found.

At 1900, CLMRG was contacted by CDR Henderson, US Navy. He requested our assistance the following morning if the missing pilot was not found in the continuing search that night. CLMRG contacted Sgt. Mike Kirkland to get the proper approval to assist the Navy in the search. The sheriff also offered the services of team members from Indian Wells Valley Search and Rescue (IWVSAR) and the Desert Unit. Members from CLMRG and IWVSAR had access to the base, and I offered to help get the Desert Unit the visitor's badges that would be required to get them on base. CDR Henderson asked us to meet at the Range Control Center (RCC) at 0800 the next morning.

All three teams checked in at the RCC with CDR Henderson at 0730. CDR Henderson briefed us on the accident and provided a list of GPS waypoints of the crash sites and potential search areas. He asked us to send a team to the waypoint of the single-seater crash site to search in that high probability area for the pilot. The other teams would search from where the other two pilots were rescued on Monday to the site of the single-seater crash (doing a zigzag grid search across the terrain and noting GPS waypoints of debris and any evidence that might help in finding the pilot).

The China Lake Police Department (CLPD) escorted the teams to their search command site south of the Mountain Springs Canyon Road. We were briefed on the previous days activities and told about the current fire activity in the area. We departed for the search area at 0900. We set up base camp on the Mountain Springs Canyon Road below the waypoint of the single-seater crash site and a relay at a camera station at Chukar Point. The relay became the starting point for the other ground teams to descend to the two-seater crash and pilot pickup waypoints to begin their grid search. The relay also had communication with the CLPD search command. Teams started searching at 0930. Teams in the vicinity of the two-seater crash soon realized that range personnel from NAVAIR were also searching in the area (they had been searching the previous day also and were being coordinated from the RCC). Two NAVAIR personnel found the missing pilot at approximately 1125 and contacted the nearby CLMRG team by voice. The pilot had died in the crash. CLPD search command was notified of the find, and the China Lake SAR helicopter responded shortly after. A grid search of the area to locate additional evidence found nothing. The search teams returned to base. During the return hike to base, two Desert Unit members began to suffer from the heat, so base asked the helicopter to evacuate them

at 1350. The helicopter picked up the two men at 1440 and transported them to the Ridgecrest hospital. Both were treated and released.

All teams were out of the field at 1658. CLMRG returned to the CLPD search command site for a debrief and then returned to Ridgecrest. We were back at the Hut by 1830.

Comments:

1. The Desert Unit had to leave two of their quads below Chukar Point. China Lake range personnel will assist in retrieving the vehicles after the all clear from the fire. Most of the terrain was not really suited for searching with quads, but they were helpful in transporting the two heat related injuries to an area where the helicopter could land easily.
2. During the briefing with CLPD search command, we asked about the fire situation. We were told that the fire had cleared the Chukar Point area and that the search area would also be clear. As it turned out, teams had to cross a fire line on the way to Chukar Point. The China Lake Fire Department (CLFD) and BLM were in the area monitoring the fire. The fire did not appear to be a major risk, but it was still a little unnerving to proceed into the fire area to set up the relay and begin the search. After the recovery, CLFD requested that all unnecessary personnel leave the Chukar Point area.
3. The satellite phone worked great. Karen Botham probably received more calls and updates than she would have on a normal operation because I tested the phone often.

Volunteer teams and members participating:

CLMRG IWVSAR Desert Unit

Linda Finco, Leader Sean Halpin Victor Yaw
Horace "Bud" Gates Nicki Johnson Richard Buckreis
Dan Bishop Dustin Gallagher James Thomas
Walter Runkle Robert Armstrong Hank Morris
Eric Toler Rich Sake Randy Glass
Daryl Hinman Ron Christy Gary Luzkeroth
Mike Renta April Halpin Jim LeBlanic
Paul DeRuiter Bill Moen Don Bennett
Dave Miles Charlie Rodgers Ed Lucio
Dennis Burge Byron Vink Tex Thomas
Curtis Davis
Karen Botham,
Coordinator

Operation 2005-07 (Mobilization)

Yosemite National Park

11 August 2005

Tom Roseman (OL)

The pager went off early in the evening of Thursday, August 11 with Dave Pope from Yosemite National Park (YNP) calling for help on a search in Hetch Hetchy for a 22-year-old male hiker who had been due out on August 9. I called Dave back, and he gave us the option of showing up either Friday morning or Saturday morning at 0600. I opted for Saturday. Dave agreed to call the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and have them call the Kern County Sheriff to release us. Tom Sakai, Dan Bishop, Mike Franklin, and Linda Finco committed to the operation, and Karen Botham agreed to be the coordinator. I had wanted to spend the weekend with Sakai at his Mammoth Lakes condominium, so I planned to drive up Friday morning to meet him. Dan Bishop agreed to lead the rest of the team up Friday evening and meet us at Sakai's place.

I went to bed that night, and because I didn't hear from the sheriff the next morning, I called Sgt. Kirkland. I found out that the subject had walked into a trail block and was alive and well despite being lost for a few days.

Sgt. Kirkland had a new message from Tulare County wanting help in Sequoia National Park.

I called Finco, who agreed to lead that operation, and Debbie Breitenstein and I headed to Mammoth

to spend the weekend hiking and climbing with the Sakais.

Operation 2005-08 (Search)

OES-05-LAW-0362 (05-08)

12-13 August 2005

Tulare County

Linda Finco (OL)

We were scheduled to leave for Hetch Hetchy later in the day for a search. Tom Roseman called at 0750 to tell me that the young man in the Hetch Hetchy search had been found alive. Our assistance, however, had been requested for a search in Tulare County. Dan Bishop and Dave Miles committed to the search, and Karen Botham coordinated the callout.

I called the Tulare County Sheriff, who said the command post would call back with more details. Around 0900, I received a call from Lt. Logue. The search was still proceeding, and I got directions to the command post. I told the sheriff that we would leave Ridgecrest around 1100 and arrive at the command post around 1600 and that we would be available for an evening or night assignment.

At the command post, we were briefed on the subject, 42-year-old Brian Lewis, a white male, 5'11" and 163 pounds, in excellent condition. Lewis was described as a paranoid schizophrenic who had been off his medication for an unknown length of time. He had talked about doing a 40-day fast as Jesus did in the Bible. Lewis had left

his parents' home in Dunlap, California (Fresno County) on Sunday, August 7 and had been reported missing to the Fresno County Sheriff later that day.

On Monday, August 8, cabin owners saw Lewis just west of Whitaker Forest, and he was seen again in the same area on Tuesday, August 9. Later that day, Lewis's vehicle was found at Quail Flat, and Park Service personnel located a black backpack in a bear box at the Redwood Meadow Canyon Trailhead that was later identified as his. (Family members identified the pack, but it was also identified by a Bible with Lewis's name in it.) On August 11, there had been numerous sightings of Lewis along the Big Meadows and Horse Corral Roads. All these sightings were within a 5- to 6-mile radius of Quail Flat, where Lewis's vehicle had been found.

After the briefing, we were assigned to walk the Ten Mile Road, where Lewis had been seen earlier that day. The assignment was to have two people hike out front, and the third person would stay back about 100 feet to look for Lewis. Based on information the sheriff had been receiving, Lewis would be seen walking on a road, but as soon as he saw someone coming, he would duck off the road into the brush until the people passed. So the idea was to have the person lagging behind maybe observe Lewis ducking on and off the road. We were also told to remove our orange shirts, keep our radios out of sight and the volume low, and just pretend to be hikers or campers out for a walk. Although we had a photocopy of a letter from his mother requesting him to end his adventure and come home to show him if he seemed willing to talk, we were not to confront him, only to radio a GPS position

As we prepared our packs for the assignment, we were reassigned to go with a deputy sheriff to interview an eyewitness at the Hume Lake store. The eyewitness had reported seeing a man fitting Lewis's description (a man wearing black shorts and a black T-shirt). We were then to go to the place last seen and try to find tracks to follow. We had a fuzzy photocopy of Lewis's footprint.

During the interview, the place last seen was said to be a turnout near the Boyden Cave in Kings River Canyon (a good distance outside of the search area but not unreasonable). We searched all the turnouts near Boyden Cave and didn't find a track matching our photocopy. We returned to base.

The next day, the sheriff said they were taking a different approach to the search. Because Lewis seemed to be actively avoiding people, the sheriff decided to have a passive search-a stakeout. Searchers would be placed along predetermined waypoints on the roads that Lewis had been seen on. Searchers would hide themselves and watch the road. If Lewis were spotted, the position would be radioed to the command post, and the command post would direct other teams to the area to try to confine him.

Again, the volunteers were not to confront Lewis; only the deputies would. Later, the sheriff would bring in a helicopter with infrared capability to try to locate him.

We (China Lake) were given three positions on Huckleberry Road. We got to our positions around 0800 and stayed there until 1730. Lewis was not seen on any of the

roads staked out that day, although eyewitnesses put Lewis in the Grant Grove area during the day.

After the debriefing, all volunteer teams were released. The search would continue but only by the Tulare County deputies. We left at 1830, stopped for dinner in Tulare, and got back to the Hut at 2300.

Comments:

1. Our satellite phone worked in the area. The sheriff brought in an OES satellite dish and phone system for the search command post (something to keep in mind for remote areas).
2. I don't think either Fresno County or Tulare County could have done anything more in the search. When looking for a person who does not want to be found or who does not want to interface with others, so that he actively avoids confronting people, searching becomes difficult. We talked about just putting "plain clothes" searchers in and around the areas Lewis had been seen (Grant Grove, Hume Lake, cabin areas, etc). That's not the kind of searching we train for, but we can do it easily.

Operation 2005-09 (Search)

SR05 - 31558 (05-09)

8 September 2005

Inyokern

Tom Sakai (OL)

At 1130 on Thursday, September 8, I got a call from Al Green asking me if I had heard the page from Sgt. Mike Kirkland of KCSD. Sgt. Kirkland wanted us to help search for a missing 4-year-old boy, Dustin Kirk, in Inyokern. The boy had last been seen at 0730 that morning near the family compound wearing a diaper and T-shirt. He was barefoot at the time. The family realized the boy was missing around 0930-1000 and began a search. Unable to find him, they called KCSD for assistance.

I agreed to take the operation and got Mary Schmerier to coordinate and Janet Westbrook and Carol Burge to telephone. Al Green, Bud Gates, and Dave Miles committed initially. We met at the Hut at 1215, were on our way by 1230, and arrived at the family home about 1300. Several KCSD and highway patrol personnel were already on scene and had searched outbuildings in the compound and several nearby abandoned buildings. We were subsequently joined by the KCSD helicopter, IWVSAR, KCSD SAR from Bakersfield, and some KCSD civilian volunteers.

After some discussion, we started cutting for sign in a quarter-mile perimeter around the place last seen (PLS), hoping to get a direction of travel. Within a half-hour, Green and Miles found some small barefoot tracks, about the size of a 4-year-old's, along one of the dirt roads. Only the middle of the roads were not covered by tire tracks from the vehicles driving to the family home or searching for Dustin. Consequently, only intermittent footprints were found. After a while, the tracks seemed to reverse themselves and return. We tracked these intermittent prints until they disappeared near

the water tank in the southwest part of the property.

At 1430, a second CLMRG team, consisting of Dan Bishop, Debbie Breitenstein, Mike Franklin,

Tom Roseman, and Eric Toler, arrived. We decided to do a larger perimeter search about a mile or so around the PLS. We split into three teams. One would search in a clockwise direction starting to the south and west. A second would search in a counter-clockwise direction. A third would do a thorough search around some of the nearby abandoned homesteads.

After about two hours, the counter-clockwise team (Roseman, Miles, and Toler) found some more of the right-size barefoot tracks on a dirt road about a mile from the home. They tracked these for about another mile and found Dustin sleeping under a creosote bush at about 1700. He was slightly sunburned and dehydrated but otherwise OK. After giving him something to drink and checking him for possible medical problems, we returned him to his home.

While the others enjoyed dinner at Bernardino's Restaurant in Inyokern, I returned home so that I could go on my planned mountain trip that evening.

About the time Dustin was found, a third CLMRG team, consisting of Walter Runkle, Bob Huey, Dave Doerr, and Curtis Davis, was organizing to join the search. We told them they could stand down.

Note: Dustin seemed to do most, if not all, of his walking on the dirt roads. Vehicle tracks covered all but the center of the roads, which made tracking difficult.

Fortunately, Dustin sometimes walked in the center of the roads.

Operation 2005-10 (Search)

12-13 October 2005

El Paso Mountains (Garlock)

Tom Roseman (OL)

Linda Finco responded to a request from Sgt. Mike Kirkland over the pager for assistance in a search for a missing man. Carol Burge signed on as coordinator and called me looking for a leader because Finco was going out of town on work related travel. I took the operation.

Debbie Breitenstein, Walter Runkle, Daryl Hinman, Mike Franklin, Werner Hueber, and I met

Sgt. Kirkland on Highway 14 at the turnoff to EP15 at 0800 the next morning. We were looking for

24-year-old Christopher Hise, a Ridgecrest man missing since October 1. We, with members of the IWVSAR team, drove about seven miles to the Burro Schmidt Tunnel. The search was to start from Hise's truck, where he had left a note saying that he was hiking toward Garlock Road. After finding the truck, we looked for tracks. The area had been walked over by others, and we were unable to identify Hise's track.

IWVSAR searched a wider area on two quads and an off-road motorcycle. One member of IWVSAR joined us for tracking. We divided into three teams—one to search around the truck to find the correct track and two to head down the large drainage toward Garlock Road. We found a wrecked truck with a June 2005 CA decal well off of any road. I called the truck's plate number in to Sgt. Kirkland to see whether it was connected to the search. It was registered to one of the reporting parties who were with Hise when they abandoned his truck. We failed to find any positive tracks and reached the Garlock Road by mid-afternoon. By the time we retrieved our vehicles at the top of the mountain, daylight was waning, so we went home to try again the next day.

Mary Schmierer agreed to be the coordinator for the second day with Al Green, Dan Bishop, and Tom Sakai joining Breitenstein, Hueber, and me. We met on Garlock Road at the start of EP100 at 0800 Thursday morning and discussed a new plan with Sgt. Kirkland and IWVSAR. CLMRG split into three teams, with Hueber as the radio relay, to search a major drainage between the truck and the tunnel. IWVSAR would work up the canyons from the bottom and to the east on their vehicles.

About an hour after heading down, just below the confluence of the three drainages, Green and Sakai found a single track with a good match to the description of Hise's footprint. Shortly after that, Breitenstein and Bishop found the same track coming into the middle drainage and heading toward Green and Sakai. Green and Sakai found a shirt and some old fireman's pants about a half-mile from the confluence. The shirt matched one in a picture I had seen of Hise. About the same time that the tracking became difficult, as Bishop, Breitenstein, and I were trying to catch up, Bishop found a credit card embossed with Hise's name. We were sure now that we were on the correct track. Green and Sakai found a new Bic lighter a short way down the canyon as the tracking got even more difficult.

We lost the track near the point where the canyon opened up at a makeshift shooting range about a half-mile from Garlock Road. We regrouped with the IWVSAR members who were searching below the range and did a line search down to the highway with no luck in picking up the track.

After a break for lunch, we did another smaller line search between the area we had searched the day before and the main line today while IWVSAR searched the south side of the highway. From the start of the canyon, we searched the ridges above both sides of the canyon and the middle trying to pick up the track. As the light faded along with our energy, we called off the search for the day.

We debriefed with a plan to do a major push on Saturday with more Kern County teams. When I called Sgt. Kirkland about noon the next day, he told me that Hise had been found from the air by Deputy Tim Posey. Posey had been assisting Sgt. Kirkland in the search and had returned with a helicopter to search where we had lost the track the day before. Hise had at some time crossed out of the canyon he was hiking in into the canyon just to the west and had died near the bottom of that one.

Not quite an operation

July 2005

Yosemite National Park

Debbie Breitenstein (Reporter)

I was contacted by three separate parties requesting the Group's aid in a search for Hyundo Ahn,

a Korean exchange student at UC Davis: Mark Buffum, an unknown friend of Ahn's family, and a member of the Korean Consulate in the Bay Area. Ahn had gone to Yosemite on June 20 to hike the John Muir trails. He picked up his permit on June 21 and was seen on the trail on June 22. He was

not reported missing until July 21, when he missed a flight home.

I told them all that we would be willing to search but that we must operate through the proper channels. To participate in a search, we must be requested by the responsible agency (Yosemite National Park in this case) with approval by OES and the Kern County Sheriff. We had not received such a request.

Ahn's backpack was found on August 5, and his body-apparently washed downstream from a stream crossing-was found the next day

The official report is at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/news/2005/asar0809.htm>.

TRIP REPORTS

Granite Peak, Montana (12,799 feet elevation)

18-23 August 2004

By Bob Huey

Tom Roseman and I rented a car Wednesday at noon and left about 1600 after I finished work. We drove to the north side of Salt Lake City and slept in the car at an RV park from 0300 to 0600. There was a lot of construction on Interstate 15 from Las Vegas through Salt Lake, but we missed it all driving late at night.

Thursday, we drove up I15 through Utah and Idaho. In Southern Montana, we got on I90 through Butte, where we stopped for lunch. (It's a big strip mining community.)

We went shopping there because one of us had left the stove and cook gear on the kitchen shelf at home. We then drove through Bozeman to Columbus 30 miles west of Billings, where we turned south. We stayed at a small motel in Absarokee. Nice place! We ate a steak dinner at a local restaurant and got a good night's sleep.

We got up at 0600 Friday morning, had a good breakfast at a local café, and drove to the road head by 0900. The road head is at the Mystic Lake power plant at around 7,500 feet of elevation. We had talked to the Park Ranger Station on Thursday and reviewed the weather reports-scattered showers on Friday and CLEAR on Saturday.

Hiking in was pleasant until we got to Froze To Death Plateau, where we experienced the scattered showers. Froze to Death Plateau is at 10,000-11,500 feet and is 3-4 miles

across to the saddle where we camped. We had gained 5,330 feet in 8 hours. Two other teams were behind us (total of five climbers), and three or four tents were higher on the ridge when we arrived at our campsite at 11,500 feet. We discussed strategies for climbing with such a large crowd the next day and decided we would sleep in and leave late in the morning (0600). One team had made three attempts at the peak and been turned around each time by weather, but the forecast for Saturday was clear. We had a good shelter and a pleasant night.

We woke up at 0400 and decided that since we were up, we might as well leave early. It was still dark after breakfast, so we took a short nap and left the campsite at 0515. No one in any of the seven tents we passed was up! We crossed the saddle at Tempest Mountain at around 0600 and followed the ridgeline and slopes down about 700 feet to the saddle between Tempest and Granite. We expected to follow the pictures from our guidebook to the summit. The pictures didn't match, but we easily picked our way up the rocky ridge and slope to a point that overlooked them.

Route finding was straightforward (even without the guide) up through two chimneys and over the next ridge. Then, we did some more difficult route finding on third, fourth, and low fifth class rock to a keyhole that was 30 feet from the summit. We were joined just below a fifth class move on the ridge by a young man who said he had been following us and had left his two teammates behind. We summited in 3 hours and 45 minutes-with a gain of 3,150 feet.

We took pictures on the summit and left the young fellow there to wait for his friends. However, minutes after we left the summit, it began to hail, snow, and blow! We found ourselves in a minor blizzard for about a half-hour as we picked our way down. Our new friend joined us, and Tom gave him a quick lesson in rappelling. We rappelled down two sections and carefully picked our way across wet rock to a place that was solid just as the snow stopped. We were able to downclimb the chimneys without a rope and got back to our campsite with no further weather outbreaks in about the same time it took us to climb to the summit. Our new friend offered us a free meal in Billings the next night if we were still in the area.

We met two other climbers near the first ridgeline of Granite who were going to attempt the summit, but we saw no one else from the seven tents we passed or the people we met on the way in. Apparently, everyone else decided not to do the peak because of the weather. We met a mountain goat at the deserted high camp near Tempest Mountain on our way back. It posed for pictures and seemed undisturbed by having us near.

At our campsite, we watched a severe weather front with booming thunder and some lightning pass the ridgeline and valley to our east, and we debated staying for the night. The squall lines passed through about every half-hour, and we got some sprinkles at our campsite, but we decided we were in no danger of an electrical storm, so we packed up and left at about 1400. Going across Froze To Death Plateau, we got

hammered with hail and hard rain for two hours-but no lightning. By the time we got across the plateau, the squall lines had all moved on, and it was sunny the rest of the afternoon.

We got down by 2000, drove to Columbus, ate at McDonalds, got a motel room, and died!

I slept until 0800 on Sunday. We packed up and had a big breakfast before heading home. We decided to drive straight south through Yellowstone National Park and by the Tetons. We saw Old Faithful erupt when we stopped there for about an hour. We drove through intermittent heavy rain to the Tetons, which were were socked in (although Mt. Moran was in the sun). We took pictures and stopped in Jackson for dinner. We did some shopping, had some Moose Drool beer (suggested by Mitch), and then drove to Evanston, Wyoming, where we stayed with family friends of mine. We left Evanston at 0930 on Monday and were home at 2030 that night. The drive was about 2,700 miles round trip. We gained 8,480 feet in 21 miles round trip on our hike and climb. A great adventure! Next year the Tetons?

Mt. Whitney

1 May 2005

By Walter Runkle

Yesterday, I climbed Mt. Whitney. The snow conditions were excellent, and a lot of snow boarders and skiers were out. One guy even brought his dog along, and the dog (named Clyde-what else?) did an impressive job of climbing to the summit. I got a couple of pictures of him. I was able to get to the summit in less than six hours, but I was glad to have an ice ax and crampons. The BD Sabretooth Crampons I was trying out did an excellent job.

I came down the Mountaineer's Route because I wanted to glissade it. I got good glissades down it, down from Iceberg Lake, down "the step" above Upper Boy Scout Lake, and finally down from the end of Clyde Meadow to Lower Boy Scout Lake. I left the summit at 1401 and was back to my car at the Portal at 1632. Only 2.5 hours. Because of the cool, cloudy day, I wasn't post-holing on the way down.

For pictures go to <http://members17.clubphoto.com/walter784953/3224592>. I recommend clicking on "View Large Images" for the best results.

Owens Peak

26 June 2005

By Walter Runkle

Curtis Davis, guests Evan Thomas, Charles Morton, Jay Kucera, Dan Goriesky, Peter ?, and I were trying for speed. We timed ourselves from the kiosk to the summit. We started up about 1705. Charles, Evan, and I got a little off route and went too far to the east. We heard Curtis in the correct gully and soon got back on track. Charles was first to the summit with a time of 1:11 or slightly better. I was second with a time of

1:13:05. Curtis, Evan, and Dan soon followed over the next few minutes. Jay and Peter took a more reasonable pace and were on the summit about 30 minutes later. On the way down, Evan and I spotted a mother bear in a tree with her cub. Evan and I took 50 minutes to get down, and we were back at the car enjoying a beer at 1925. Charles and Dan got down about 2000, and Curtis, Jay, and Peter were down by 2030.

McCady, Hitchcock, Muir, etc

Sep 17-18

By Bob Huey

Tom Brown and I started from the car at 9:30 up Whitney Trail to Consultation Lake. The scree slope to Arc Pass was brutal, and Tom stayed at the pass while I climbed McAdie with David Harris (David is Dan Harris's oldest son and was in the area with friends from San Jose to climb the 4th class route from the bottom of Muir. Dan was a member of CLMRG in the 80s.) Tom and I went down from Arc Pass and spent the night above Sky Blue Lake.

The next day, we followed the drainage from Sky Blue Lake back around McAdie down to the lake on the west side of McAdie and up the scree slope toward Discovery Pinnacle, where we dropped our packs along the ridge and went to climb Hitchcock (8 hours). We returned to our packs, joined the Whitney Trail below Discovery Pinnacle, and got back to our car after a 14-hour day.