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JAN AND HERB CONN

NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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Number 2

Members pick Russell and Pregnall to head Section

Officers nominated by the committee (see January UP ROPE) were elected at the annual meeting on 9 January:

Tom Russell, chairman
Stuart Pregnall, vice chairman
Pete Grant, secretary
Dave Atkinson, treasurer.

The membership thanked Charlie Dorian, chairman; Tom Russell, vice chairman, Dave Atkinson, treasurer and the chairmen and members of committees for their service to the section in the past year.

PATC membership reelects Reeder president

In the first contested presidential election in the history of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Jack Reeder was reelected. At the annual meeting on 28 January, PATC members also voted for the official slate of nominees which was not contested. Bill Hutchinson, former PATC president, who ran against the incumbent, had been proposed for office by a number of PATC members who felt that the club's ties with the trail community and the official agencies were not what they used to be.

Everest--booked up

Mt. Everest is now booked up by expeditions for the pre- and post-monsoon and winter seasons till 1997, announced the Nepalese Ministry of Tourism. Current peak fee is Rs.50,000.

I S M--bookings open

The International School of Mountaineering in Leysin, Switzerland, is again offering basic and intermediate courses in mountaineering this summer. Several ski mountaineering trips are scheduled for April and special alpine courses this summer for Mt. Blanc, Bernese Oberland, Bregaglia and Zermatt. Contact: Pat Littlejohn, Director, ISM, Club Vagabond, CH-1854 Leysin, Switzerland; tel.: 025-34 13 21.

Membership Roster: With this issue, Section members will receive the 1984 Mountaineering Section membership roster. The 1985 list, defining membership as of last month, will be issued later. (Membership dues for 1985 were due by January 20. If you have not yet paid, send your check now to Treasurer, MS PATC, 1718 N Street NW, Washington DC 20036. Annual dues are \$15.00 for individual members.)

PATC MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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UP ROPE is published monthly, except during August, by and for members of the Mountaineering Section of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington, D.C., Editorial contributions are welcome and should be sent to Editor, Up Rope, Mountaineering Section, PATC, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 before the 20th of each month.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The new year is upon us and we, the K----9 D/v., would like to take this opportunity to set forth our views on the past year's events and make suggestions as to how the Mountaineering Section can improve the format of its activities so that all of us can have a full and enjoyable climbing year.

First, of all, where the H--k have Martha Hale's brownies been? For that matter, where has Martha Hale been? When we agreed to come along on these weekly jaunts, we were assured that brownies would be provided. We pretty much depended on it.

When I finish a hard 5.12 overhang my glycogen-depleted body cries out for glucose. If we dogs are expected to be responsible for breaking trail, demonstrating 5.12 techniques, protecting anchor ropes from errant squiggles, and in extreme circumstances, making sure that James has chalk; it is only fitting that the weekly trip leader be responsible for providing us with an adequate supply of brownies. It is commendable that occasionally someone has remembered us, and these individuals deserve our deepest thanks. To them we say keep up the good work. To the rest of you, think about it. Let us strive to have brownies on every trip. Ok?

Our second concern has been the trend toward permitting improperly chaperoned humans on climbs. We have been lucky in the past that no incidences have occurred. But the system is taxed and it is only a matter of time before disaster strikes and some poor unfortunate human wanders off into the woods never to see rock again.

We came very close to this type of disaster this fall at Seneca Rocks. Hundreds of people on the rocks and only 2 dogs on patrol, Edgar Cummings and myself. After six hours of vigilance, inspecting belays, pointing out routes and licking perspiration from tired faces, we were exhausted. Even a whippet can only run around Seneca Rocks so many times. We to retreat to the parking lot. Concern developed when Ed--- "isn't Nebraska next to Oregon?"--- Cummings failed to return to the base at the appointed time. With no dog patrol out, anything could have happened. Luckily nothing did. Our fears were quieted when we saw Ricky Todd leading Ed across the sling bridge. But if Ricky hadn't had the presence of mind to follow the road, the two of them would still be in W. Va.

Safety demands that no trip be permitted without a ratio of 1 dog to every 3 people; 1 belayer, 1 climber, and 1 to feed the dog. Any higher ratio is asking for trouble. If the section insists on having an unrestricted number of humans cluttering the rocks, then at least let's insist on an appropriate number of dogs on patrol. Please, guys, Edgar, Yankee, Gennie, Benji, and I can't do all the work, we need your help, bring more dogs (and it follows, more brownies); we will train the newcomers. (cont. p.3)

Letter (cont.)

Our final request is that when top roping, please designate a particular area, preferably near the brown'es, where people are to arrange their coats and gear in such a manner so that we dogs can sit on them in warmth and comfort. Too many times Edgar has had to dig up rocks and rearrange leaves to have a place to sit. This takes up his valuable time, time that really should be spent sleeping or eating. It also gets the ropes dirty.

I'm sure that if we work together on these minor points, we can all have a good climbing year in 1985. Thanks for your support in the past and its continuance.

Yours truly, Cedric Cummings, P.P?

P.S. Edgar wishes it be known that he doesn't wear any ermine on his capes. Let's stop these vicious rumors. Ok.

Before UP ROPE can competently go to the dogs, we need someone who can type PAWS or we have to convert human talk to dog speak, dropp'n all the ... and the dots atop. Needed: dog of a typer.
The Ed'tor

Tom Russell's Home Made Beef Jerky

When I start planning meals to be prepared out-of-doors, the thought of another breakfast of instant oatmeal almost makes me wretch. A freeze dinner, maybe I can force one down if absolutely necessary. What does make my mouth water is my "Home Made Beef Jerky." It's a staple for my stores whether I'm mountaineering, backpacking, or ski touring. I sometimes make up a batch just for snacks around the house. Jerky has all the "right stuff"...it's easy to make, doesn't weigh much, will keep for long periods of time without refrigeration, but most of all and perhaps most important..it's "Tasty." The spicier the better.

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. lean top round beefsteak.

1/2 cup Soy Sauce or Teryaki Sauce.

1/2 cup Worcestershire Sauce.

Spice to taste, be generous with the spices and you won't regret it. I'll name a few of the ones I use; you may find other combinations that suit your taste better.

Thyme

Oregano

Tabasco

Garlic powder

Onion powder

Black Pepper

"Jane's Crazy Mixed-Up Salt"

You have to slice the round steak into strips about 1/8 inch thick. This is most easily done, by almost freezing the round

Beef Jerky (cont.)

steak. I usually do freeze it and have to remove it from the freezer and let it thaw a little before slicing. Buy very lean beef and trim off all fat. Fat turns rancid after a while. Slice into strips about an 1/8 of an inch thick.

Mix the spices with Soy and Worcestershire Sauce and marinate strips for about 24 hours. Remove strips from marinade and dry them by rolling them in paper towels. Take grill out of your oven, place dried strips and return it to the upper position in your oven. Cover lower grill with aluminum foil. This keeps any remaining marinade from dripping onto the bottom of your oven. The next step is the most CRITICAL step in making Jerky. Turn the oven to BAKE and the temperature setting to LOW and leave the oven door slightly open (about 6 inches). Dry strips for some 12-14 hours. Remember that you are drying the beef, NOT cooking it. Leaving the door ajar, not open allows the air to circulate for a more efficient drying process.

After 12 or so hours, the beef will look black and feel rubbery when you bend it. Taste it, it should be hard to chew. If it is, then the Jerky is probably done. If it crumbles when you bend it, your oven was too hot or maybe it was dried too long. I suggest you experiment, making a couple of batches of Jerky before you make some for an extended trip.

It's hard to say how long Jerky will last. That depends on whether you are in the hot steamy tropics or on some frigid mountain peak. We took some to the Pamirs this summer, I made it in the middle of July and we finished off the last piece at the Gunks in September. Once I kept some in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for some 10 months. There was no mold, but it had lost most of its flavor. Happy chewin!

BOOK REVIEW

The Shishapangma Expedition, Doug Scott and Alex MacIntyre

\$18.95 cloth. The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1985, 304 p., 50BW prints, maps.

With all the trappings of an action novel, The Shishapangma Expedition often reads like one. Travelling through the exotic background of Tibet, facing the ubiquitous and often invidious Chinese bureaucracy (personified by the malcontent Mr. Pemba), the small team of Alex MacIntyre, Doug Scott, Paul Braithwaite, Elaine Brook, Roger Baxter-Jones and Nick Prescott wrangle with each other (including a fist fight) and attempt to come to terms with their environment and themselves. The weather is lousy, the food worse, and the climbers succumb to their foibles. Doug, the old man, is often juxtaposed with the upstart Alex. Nick and Paul face personal failures and triumphs. Elaine, joining the team at the last moment, faces the disappointment and unenviable position of being odd woman out. Roger is the professional guide among the group, and as such stands apart observing the action with wry humor.

Written mainly by the late Alex MacIntyre, the expedition story contains one of the most complete accounts of how tenuous and traumatic our sport can be at its upper limits. It also happens to be a beautifully crafted tale. MacIntyre's earlier works in Mountain magazine and other journals gave promise to the clarity and style that consistently sculpt this book.

(cont.p.5)

Shishapangma (cont.)

"Doug proclaimed the beauty of the sunset over Hagen't Col whilst leaping in and out of the sac in his stockinged feet, exclaiming of the rapidly falling temperature and rearranging the tent's suspension points. It was a little like camping with a scoutmaster who is more keen on the finer aspects of scouting than on his charges."

After illness and inexperience halve the number of climbers, tensions mount between the technically brilliant, energetic MacIntyre and the more staid Scott. MacIntyre's comment that "The wall was the ambition, the style became the obsession," does not adequately describe his near obsession with the wall itself. Frequent argument between team members reflects MacIntyre's need for climbing to the summit and Scott's need for something else. Scott comments early in the tale, "The importance of what we do is not in standing upon the summit of our peak but what happens along the way," and later, "I knew that as good as these feelings (summit ambitions) felt, they were a form of madness."

MacIntyre and Scott come to terms with each other and forge a compromise. Baxter-Jones, despite a workmanlike attitude ("Himalayan climbing is about putting one foot in front of another and breathing whilst doing so,") also wants to go on to experience what he describes as "Here, as nowhere else, the climber sees the immensity of the world-on the earth but not of it, playing games with gravity amongst all that beauty." As a team, they prepare for and complete the climb. The others, Braithwaite and Brook travelling through Tibet and Prescott waiting below, are unhappily absent. And yet, since this is in essence the epic tale of a journey, this is to be expected.

I cannot but read Shishapangma and recall Homer's Odyssey, the original epic tale of journey. I must also recall Siddhartha Gautama's seeking of the way. There are those in Shishapangma who trace the Four Noble Truths, and for them there is at least a temporary attainment of sorts. As such, despite the fractious behavior, anger, frustration and futility, this book ends happily.

Following in the tradition of expedition books that enables the reader to peer into each of the climber's persona through the use of frequent comments, this account remains mostly MacIntyre's work. Holed up in his house for two months, he devoted the same energy and care to the manuscript that he required to achieve his status as one of the leading Himalayan alpinists. After delivering the book in draft form, he left for the Himalaya again, where he met with his fatal accident. It has been commented that the book's award, the Boardman-Tasker prize in 1984, for outstanding contribution to mountain literature, is a posthumous tribute to MacIntyre. This contention gives little of the tribute that the book will achieve on its own. It is a classic in its own right. The contributions of the other team members, and primarily Scott, combine to give this work a richness of texture and completeness that has rarely been achieved. Reading it, I have laughed with the climbers, cried with them, been angry and frustrated, elated and even let down.

For the history and geography buffs, Scott has appended a wealth of scholarly information about climbing in the region, medicine, photography, and the usual expedition topics. These are all the more interesting by virtue of their authorship--Doug Scott's prolific and successful history mean that he must be doing something right, and many will want to know how he does it.

Finally, a word about production. It is unfortunate that The Mountaineers couldn't reproduce at least some of the photos in color. This is a shortsighted (although economic) approach to publishing, and serves only to frustrate the reader and short shrift the photographer.

Stuart Pegg

