



Kootenay Mountaineering Club

The Newsletter for people with year-round pursuits.

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Wapta Traverse pictures better than the real thing?

Story and Photos by Jason Hummel

I look outward into the Wapta Icefields and beyond, squinting. A hazy-mirage of mountains mold into sun-blurred castles of rock and ice. Just then, as if they materialized from nowhere, clouds appear from the east, piling up on the Continental Divide like waves on the beach. That constant wind buffeting my face all morning had left by noontime. For the moment, I hear nothing - see nothing but great white vastness. Like a flea lost on a sea of bed sheets, I cannot find an end to this ice; it stretches to the horizon in all directions - flat, steep, and rolling; broken, busted and looming; blowing, swirling and drifting. If not for my ski partners, Cecile and Sky, it would be lonely here. Instead smiles are passed back and forth as we traverse towards 10,270-foot Mount Olive on the second day of our journey along the Wapta Traverse.

The day before we
are cruising

are
across Bow Lake
toward the Ice fields. Our plan is to ski the Wapta Traverse, a popular and beautiful high route through the lofty Canadian Rockies. Persistent weak layers from recent snowfall made our plans for Columbia Peak less attractive. Like our trip to Banff in January, other alternatives were searched out. This is why we are now on the Wapta. Each step forward was making me less and less concerned about the avalanche conditions, especially as I knew we had a few days to let them consolidate. For us, our plans were malleable. Just that morning we had spotted this trip in a guidebook. Such spontaneity is important here or anywhere. You come and see what there is, and you maximize the opportunities you find at your feet. South faces less avy prone? North face wind loaded? Who knows? You just have to take what you have and run with it.

That being said, avy danger is on my mind as I watch a cloud of snow wash over a mountainous shoulder. "Look and see," I tell myself. As we rounded a corner, we became more confident of a safe way ahead and within a few hours we were at the Bow Hut. Once we fill up with water and a snack, we decided to continue on to Peyto Hut, so we'd be better situated for climbing the following morning.

Since it is late, sun and shadow begin to play on slopes ahead. Snow traces lines like an artist's brush. It's among my favorite natural forces - this wind. What doesn't translate into words or image is the sound or the push and pull of that interminable energy. Often I wonder if I, so absorbed in the moment, would just fall apart into a million pieces of ice and fly away across this wintry expanse. What snow piles up on rocks and glaciers are carved with wind over and again, through melt and freeze, through all the seasons. Such energies are what make the mountains an ever-changing environment.

On the following morning of our second day, we break from our lackadaisical eating and packing to finally be set on our way. Sky is intent on Mount Baker, which for those of us from Washington State will recognize the name as our estimable and northerly-most volcano known as Mount Baker.

From over the Continental Divide clouds stack up and rise over. At first, fingers sweep over us and dissipate. Then, as we climb to the 10,000-ft ridgeline, we are lost in the white sameness, pushing forward only because higher realms appear ahead of us. Near the top I see Sky orking through deep snow as he boots to a short rocky climb. "How does it look?" He doesn't know yet, so I leave my skis and climb over. By then he is atop and throws down a rope for me. With a few careful moves, I am walking by him and standing on our first summit.

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Climbers Access Society of BC supports crag adoptions

"By participating in trash clean-ups, erosion maintenance, trail construction and so on, you not only improve your climbing experience directly but you also give back to the environment and show the non-climbing public that you care about the places you climb." CASBC members can receive all sorts of support for their project, including full financial support and great gear prizes from their sponsors to reward volunteers. For more information, ideas of possible projects, and an application form, visit <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2237-70169-111-02>

Think big: planning for expedition climbing

"Logistics end most potential expeditions before they even get past the "dude, we should go to Alaska" stage, but the extra effort is well worth it to get a big trip under your belt. Proper planning for a serious trip involves anywhere from six to 10 months, and you really don't want to miss an important step." Read more at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2619-70169-120-02>

India opens Himalaya peaks to foreign climbers, trekkers

"Foreigners will be allowed to climb nearly 100 high-altitude Himalayan peaks for the first time on the Indian side of Kashmir (Ladakh region), an official said Friday. The move by the Indian government to allow foreign climbers follows a significant decline in violence by insurgent groups in the region since India and Pakistan started a peace process in 2004." Read the full story at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2580-70169-117-02>

Mt. John Clarke

The name Mount John Clarke was recently officially adopted by the BC provincial government for the summit formerly known as "Sun Peak." John (1945-2003), was an honorary member of the ACC and the BCMC, an honorary member of the Squamish Nation and a recipient of the Order of Canada. "He is credited with 600 first ascents, all done in a self-reliant style with minimal reliance on air transport, and contributed numerous articles detailing his climbs in the Canadian Alpine Journal." Read more at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2610-70169-120-02>



Summit Creek to Sheep Creek
Photo courtesy of Sandra McGuiness

Canadian Rock - Select Climbs of the West

"Kevin McLane has just released his much-anticipated new guidebook to (western) Canada's finest crags. Covering 70 climbing areas and packed with over 800 photos and topos, Canadian Rock - Select Climbs of the West is an excellent guide and mandatory reading for any Canadian climber." More details can be found at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2611-70169-120-02> (Source: <http://gripped.com>)

BC's oldest park falling into disrepair

"A Centennial celebration for the province's oldest park could be marred by closed trails and broken bridges. The Friends of Strathcona Park are warning that with several trails closed, one for more than two years, the park will fall into disrepair if the provincial government doesn't provide more funding for BC Parks." Read more at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2614-70169-120-02>

Wapta Traverse pictures better than the real thing?

Okay, maybe not quite. But Jason Hummel is a truly gifted photographer that caught some incredible images on the Wapta Traverse this winter. See his photos and trip report at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2578-70169-117-02>

BC Parks to turn 100

In 2011, BC Parks will be 100 years old. This summer, 23 hardy adventurers will re-trace Price Ellison's 1910 journey of exploration into the area that is now Strathcona Park - BC's first. Find out how you can join part or all of the expedition at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2613-70169-120-02>

A few hints and tips from Ken Holmes.

The basic Dynafit TLT ski touring binding is probably the most durable and tough ski touring binding ever invented, nevertheless be aware that there are a few things that can go wrong. When you put your gear away for the summer, do a few simple checks of your bindings and boots so that you are in good shape for next season.

As with all bindings there are a few fundamental things to check, such as making sure the release settings are correct and the mounting screws are secure. These simple checks however have more significance with the Dynafit. The large screw that adjusts the lateral heel release setting can back off, and if it backs off far enough it is possible to lose the body of the heel binding and the springs. This could be disastrous on a tour. It happened to a friend...but fortunately in a parking lot at the end of the trip.

The heel mounting screws also play a more significant role in the Dynafit system since the heel binding has a post with a base plate that sits on the top of the ski. If the mounting screws are loose this can allow the heelpiece to wobble or rock.

A further significance of this is that the ski top-sheet is an integral part of the binding "system". I have recently had a problem with heel binding "rocking or wobble. The bindings are three years old. Initially I was convinced that it was a binding problem. However, the "rocking" was eliminated by the local ski tech removing the binding from the ski and shimming under the "post" with plastic tape. After communicating with the "guru" of Dynafit bindings, Lou Dawson, www.wildsnow.com, I learned that the top-sheet of the ski can 'dimple' due to the load on the heel post. The extent of this depends on the structure of the ski and it's top-sheet. I confirmed that my binding was actually ok by taking it off the ski and mounting it on a previously un-mounted part of an old ski with metal top-sheet. "Lo and behold" it was 'solid'. Replacing it on my "dimpled" ski with a plastic tape shim under the post solved the "rocking" problem.

Another thing to check each season is the condition of the plastic bushing in the heel binding. This can wear and also cause binding wobble. This is especially so when brakes are used. Grease the bushings each season. Replace the bushings if worn and carry a spare set in your repair kit.

As Dynafit users know, the boot is also part of the binding "system". I recently found a problem with the screw coming loose that holds the metal plate on the rear of the heel of the boot. (The one that the two pins fits into). This could have had disastrous consequences on a trip if the screw had backed out far enough to lose the metal piece altogether or break the screw. I found out from the wildsnow blog that this has happened to others. I took the screws out, put some 5-minute epoxy in the screw holes and replaced the screws. Hopefully this will lock the screws in place and prevent them coming loose again. Check that your screws are secure and the plate is not loose.

If you have the Dynafit Comfort binding, be aware also that the ski brake can move forward and come off the binding if the flat spring holding it in place is displaced or lost. (This can also happen with the latest Vertical ST and FT). Also, the plastic "volcanoes" on top of the heel bindings are also not as durable as the metal top-plate on the TLT and I have seen broken ones. Check them for damage.

Finally, if you are checking out the used Dynafit market, avoid the model called the Tristep. This was Dynafit's first attempt at improving the basic TLT but the re-design had some significant problems. The toe could not be locked properly in the touring position and the boot could come out of the binding. (Usually in the worst situation like doing a kick turn on a steep slope!)

The Comfort was the next "upgrade" and also has an inherent design problem with the heel turning into the locked position from the touring position due to ice build up on the "curved" ledge that the boot sits on. This usually happens with wet snow building up and getting compressed into ice by the boot heel. Nothing much you can do about it except to be aware and clean it off with the ski pole tip regularly. One advantage of the Comfort (and the Vertical) is that it can be adjusted to about 3 boot sizes versus only one boot size for the TLT.

If you are in the market for Dynafit bindings, the basic TLT model is hard to beat and would be my recommendation. It can be trouble free for many years if a few basic preventive maintenance checks, as described, are done regularly.



Trips Report

Bear Hollow

Jan 17th 2010

9 of us met at Strawberry Pass and after introductions skinned up and around the West side of Mt. Crowe. The skies were overcast and the wind brisk, so a little heavy trail breaking kept us warm. Upon reaching the North ridge, we swung around and headed in a South Easterly direction traveling through big old forest. When we reached the Bear Hollow cabin we were happy to discover the fire already lit by the caretaker Les, who also stopped by to say hello. This "young" man makes numerous runs off Crowe daily! After a quick snack, we worked our way up through deep snow to the Col between Mts. Crowe and Neptune.

Then the reward, a beautiful ski back down to the cabin where we stopped for lunch. Continuing our return journey we made several runs on the North ridge clear cut which was great in the sunshine, then returned to our vehicles. Apart from Matt's painful blisters, we all had an enjoyable day.

Many thanks to Vicki, Joanne, Matt, Bob, Dave, Dave, Dave (it was a good year) Peter and self Jill.

Kootenay Pass

January 24th 2010

We merry band of "people of the powder" departed Nelson, and with

a quick stop at the DragonFly cafe in Salmo, arrived at Kootenay Pass. After doing our transceiver check, we contoured in more or less a southeasterly direction for some time to one of my "not so secret anymore" stashes of tall timbered KP pow; yo-yoed the beautiful timbered lines several times and then headed for home once it started to get on. Snow stability was good, with temperatures remaining near -2 to -4 C all day. About 30cm of dry KP powder over a strong rain crust aided in stability. Awesome snow, great conditions, and good folks to ski with- thankyou all for being such a good group!

We were Eva Boehringer, Aaron Barrie, Matty Walton, Larry Hanlon, Graham Jamin, Dave Mitchell and visitor Debra Reid with Curt Nixon acting as Trip Leader who as "leader" was able to poach several of the lines.

Mt. Beattie

February 13th 2010

On Saturday, Feb. 13, 2010, three of us snowshoed up to the backside of Mt. Beattie. The quality of snow was excellent and there was about eight inches of fairly fresh and moist newish snowfall. We were the only folks on snowshoes. We encountered a few skiers and gladly followed their tracks. The weather conditions were moderately socked in so no excellent views were had, although there were a couple of holes in the clouds to allow for some of the blue stuff to be seen. This was P'nina's first winter trip lead. It

was a great learning experience. With a 9:30 hiking start, we were back at the car by 1:30 pm, with an elevation gain of about 500 metres. Hoping that more folks will come out for the next snowshoe trip.

We were P'nina Shames, Hazel and Ed Beynon.

What Goes Whumpf? Plewman Basin

Introduction to Ski Touring Series

February 14th 2010

What goes whumpf? A big dump of heavy wet snow over 20 to 40 cm of near surface facets as we discovered on our tour to Plewman Basin. Things go whumpf and the snowpack cracks.

Six of us left the winter parking lot at about 8.20 am and headed up the old logging road that is a short-cut to the Plewman area. Since I have last skied up here, the access has been considerably improved - a new section of road runs out to the Hwy 3B and cuts off the short, bushy section that used to precede reaching the logging road.

We skied up the logging road to reach the summer trail, where Maureen, who was falling ill with some kind of virus, wisely turned back. The rest of us continued on up the summer trail until we found some shelter under some trees for our ten o'clock "elevenses". The wet weather did not encourage any lingering and we carried on until we reached open slopes in Plewman Basin. We found

somewhere from 20 to 30 cm of relatively heavy snow lying over a mix of near surface facets and melt-freeze crusts which gave easy to moderate hand shears.

Opting for conservative terrain we built an up-track up some gentle 25 degree terrain, where we experienced many, many whumpfs and long shooting cracks as we fractured the weak layer below the new snow which had rapidly formed a soft slab. We skied two runs down gently gladed terrain, before admitting that, despite quite pleasant skiing, we were thoroughly wet through and happy enough to go home. But not before having some of Jill's delicious Valentines Day chocolate chip cookies!

Participants: Maureen Kowalchuk, Jill Watson, Terry Simpson, Diane Paolini, Jocelyne Martin and coordinator, Sandra McGuinness

Circumnavigation of Mt. Crowe

February 21st 2010

An idea I've had for sometime, so "exploring we did go". 8 of us met at Strawberry Pass on a cold and sunny morning. After prep checks we skinned up the South facing side of Mt. Crowe. The conditions were rock hard ice, but we seemed to get good purchase and moved up and up. After a particularly steep section, we regrouped by what is now known as "Chicks Rock", thanks to Vicki. It was here that Dave announced he would go back, from yesterdays chest injury from that dangerous sport curling was very painful. Indeed, he was in pain so out with the drugs and on we went. Ever moving up we then came across a new cabin (Wolf's Den) with stunning views. This

little gem is lovingly built with hand peeled logs and hand hewn floor and door. Priceless realestate. After our morning break we pushed on through the forest, holding our line and going in a Northerly direction until we popped out at the base of the extremely steep South Easterly face of Mt. Crowe. Back out in the sun again we were warm, the snow soft and the surrounding country was gorgeous. Carefully we traversed to the Big Red Cat track and made our way up the very steep pitch to the Col adjoining Mts. Crowe and Neptune. After a quick ski down the other side we stopped for lunch at the Bear Hollow cabin. Continuing along this valley we made numerous runs on the North ridge clearcut. It was fabulous and so were the grins. Then back to our vehicles via the West side of Crowe. This trip took a leisurely 6 1/2 hrs.

The trip was a huge success thanks to Diane, Terry, Vicki, Graham, Dave, Dave, Dave and self, Jill.

Riondel Waterline Trail

April 10th 2010

9:03 am. The sun was shining on sleepy Riondel when the off-season population of the town increased nearly 10 percent with the arrival of KMCers from the 'far side'. The group barely avoided an early morning session of Turbo Jam in the Seniors Room while enroute to the Historical Society's museum in the Community Center. A few introductions were followed by a 10 minute local history rant and a brief overview of the impending excursion; Riondel's historic waterline trail. This 2.5mile trail and wood stave pipeline, located between Tam

O'Shanter Creek and the Bluebell lead-silver mine, was built in 1905 by mineworkers under the direction Count Edouard Riondel, President of the French-owned Canadian Metal Company. This gravity feed water system had a head of 700 feet and generated 475 horsepower at the mine site to operate the equipment.

After a brief outdoor, arm-waving orientation near the reclaimed open pit or "glory-hole", the group drove north of Riondel to a convenient access route. Here, a wellmaintained path through private land (past an unusual garden with 38 bathtubs) and crown land, ascended about 600 feet to the main trail at 2,450 feet elevation. The first point of interest was a large water tank where both the main pipeline (from Tam O'Shanter Creek) and a smaller secondary pipeline (from Indian Creek) converged. The secondary line provided a vacuum to draw water along the main line by a principle developed by Italian physicist Giovanni Venturi in the late 1700s. Only David C. was skeptical of the "Venturi Effect". Rather than dwell on the subject, the group wandered north along the trail where exposures of long sections of coiled wire supported by rock walls are all that remains of the pipeline. After a brief lunch stop, the hikers descended into the Tam O'Shanter watershed where the trail snakes along south side of the canyon. Several points of interest on this section of the trail included: wooden cribbing and rock walls to support the waterline, large circular metal flanges that were cabled and rock bolted to the canyon wall where the pipeline was suspended, wooden cribbing at the dam/pipeline intake on the creek, and the remains of a cabin. Workers who were stationed at this cabin maintained the water flow through the pipeline and detonated charges of dynamite as a signal for

the other miners at Plaid Lake (six kilometers upstream) to open the floodgates at a water storage dam. There is little doubt that the 15 hikers in attendance at the Tam O'Shanter dam at 1:12pm marked a record-setting gathering during the pipeline's 105-year history.

After a brief stop, the group backtracked down the trail to take the 3:40pm ferry back to the 'far side'. A couple stayed on to visit the Fowler homestead at Bluebell Bay and also the mineworkings, orchard and wharf area at Galena Bay. By 5pm, only the co-ordinator was left to contemplate the "Venturi Effect" and its longterm affect on David C.

Participants included: Mary Prothro, Terri and Rob Richardson, Alex and Kathleen Nichol, Ron Harder, Carol Potasnyk, Diane Gamble, Dave St. Denis, Carole Page, David Cunningham, Chuck Macklon, Candice Mead, Brian Cullen and Terry Turner (co-ordinator).

Yellow Pine Trail, Syringa Park

April 11th 2010

After a minor revolt at the beginning of the hike regarding the preferred route as well as a brief separation of the leader from the remainder of the group later on, the Yellow Pine hike, combined with a short after-hike side trip to nearby Tulip Creek Falls, was a great early season outing. Without going into a lot of detail, suffice to say that trip leaders need to make sure that they prepare a solid trip plan and then review it with participants for their input and endorsement before starting the hike. By taking these steps, a lot of confusion and uncertainty will

certainly be avoided. In fact, it is recommended that leaders take a look at the "Responsibilities of KMC Trip Coordinators". Plenty of good information is available, beneficial even for seasoned, long-time coordinators.

A group of thirteen departed from Syringa Park shortly after 10:00 am. Although the weather, initially, was rather blustery, the group easily made its way up to a series of viewpoints overlooking Arrow Lake. As the day progressed, the weather improved with the sun appearing quite strongly by mid afternoon and warming everyone nicely. Although most of the group departed for home after the Yellow Pine trail was completed, a group of five took a short drive to the Tulip Creek trailhead to see Tulip Creek Falls. Three others from the Castlegar Area who were passing by and looking for the Tulip Creek access point were also recruited.

Participants were Nancy Kalawsky, Katie Brown, Greg Osadchuk, Bob Dean, Al Sheppard, Pat Sheppard, Christine Sutherland, Chris Fairbank, Cindy Lipscombe, Barry Lipscombe, Denise Lipscombe, Chelsea Richards, and coordinator Don Harasym.

Ward's Ferry Trail

April 14th 2010

The day started with some high overcast in the sky but before we had arrived at the two trailheads the sky had opened up, the sun was shining and the day proceeded to be warm and very pleasant.

We met everybody at the pull-off for the Blewett Road on Highway 3A/6 at South Slocan at 0900 hrs.

Everybody present signed up on the participation sheet. Then we split the large group of sixteen into two self-selected, almost-equal-size subgroups. By chance, one contained only men and the other all the women and one man. And so it was that eight women and one man in care of navigator Anna Thyer and tail sweep Liz Maluta set off in their two vehicles for the Rover Creek Forest Service access road and the northern trail-head of the Ward's Ferry Trail approx 1.7 km from its origin on the Blewett Road just east of its crossing of B.C. Hydro's Kootenay Canal. The other subgroup, with Peter Wood navigating and Ted Ibrahim as tail sweep took off in their two vehicles for the ferry over to Glade and the southern trail-head to the Ward's Ferry Trail, close by the river at the very north end of the Glade flats. Other vehicles were left at the rendezvous by the highway.

Both parties had very pleasant easy walks towards each other from opposite ends of the trail. The northern start group arrived about ten minutes ahead of the southern start group, at the chosen and customary lunch spot, opposite and across the Kootenay River from the very angular northeastern corner of Shoreacres. This is a gently-sloping grassy meadow overlooking the big bend and very wide part in the river, formerly known as 'Ward's Pool', now known as 'Slocan Pool', with its island, variously named 'Gold Island', 'Tree Island' and even 'Whitely's Island', depending on the source one consults.

Here the parties mingled for lunch and chatted about natural history observations made along their separate ways to the lunch spot. Some highlights this reporter remembers include seeing and recognizing, thanks to Ed Beynum, a Northern Goshawk flashing

overhead across the river towards Shoreacres, flowering Small-flowered Woodland Star, and Small-flowered Blue-eyed Mary. Across the water while lunching, we could see the ancient Bald Eagle's nest in what looks like a tight-branching and leafy gall, part way up an old western white pine on Tree Island. A pair of common Goldeneye Ducks were diving on the pool and a pair of Common Mergansers lingered among the on-shore boulders and swallows swooped for flies over the water. Another 'diversion' along the way and just before lunch for the southern start group, was to peer down into the flooded entranceway of the old mine shaft located slightly above the trail and requiring a short scramble up the spoil pile from the old workings. We had a very nice and leisurely lunch-break between 1130 and 1300 hrs.

The original subgroups reformed, drivers traded vehicle keys and each group then set off to trace the other's pre-lunch tracks to the parked vehicles. All went well. The trail is in easily passable condition with only a few minor tree blow-downs to step over and the rank bracken fern and tall grass of the mid summer still to grow up. The group driving back from Glade made it back to the rendezvous about ten minutes ahead of the Rover Creek exit group. Vehicle keys were traded back to owners and we were all away to our homes happily the better for our easy day's outing. Thanks to all for their participation and good company.

We were: Anna Thyer, Liz Maluta, Carol Page, Carol Potasnyk, Miriam Williams, Sylvia Smith, Sara Judith, Mary McEwan, Ted Ibrahim, Don Harasym, Hamish Mutch, Ed Beynum, Tom Johnston, Brian McEwan, David

Cunningham, and Peter Wood reporter and trip co-ordinator.

Lightning Strike (2182m/7200ft) and Baldy Rocks (2165m/7145ft)

April 24, 2010

It was spring in the valley; the tulips were in full bloom and the birds were chirping. It is a time of the year where we park our skis and other snow gear in a dark corner of the basement and pull out our shorts and hiking boots. Reportedly one KMC hike attracted up to two-dozen participants a week earlier! However, five KMC members bucked this trend in order to experience a last taste of winter "up high", destination: Kootenay pass summit.

There was only a moment of hesitation amongst the hikers when we parked the SUV at the pass in a blinding snowstorm. Nevertheless optimism prevailed and we started our snowshoe up the road towards the Ripple ridge cabin. There was

his multi-strap snowshoes, since his most recent foot appendages in the Caribbean were much simpler swimming flippers.

As we turned from the trail pass West on to the Ripple ridge trail, the snow stopped and the warm sun came out allowing us to shed the various layers of winter clothing. Since we went from cold blasts of wind and snow to sunshine and back, clothes had to be frequently adjusted to the changing conditions. Once on the ridge, we were pummelled with refreshing fine spindrift snow, creating interesting pattern effects on the ground and swirls in the air around us.

After a couple of hours hiking, the summit of Lightning Strike was reached with great views in all directions. Some of us expressed a secret wish at this time, to descend via skis instead of snowshoes in the three inches of fresh powder.

After lunch in a sheltered area lower down (where a probe measured 6 feet of snow) we hiked back to the pass and energetically climbed up Baldy Rocks overlooking the highway. Well satisfied with our two summits in the bag, a few celebratory photos

were taken and down we went back into a full-blown snowstorm again! This turned into sunshine, the moment we arrived back at the car and after shaking the snow off our jackets and hats, motored down to Salmo

where a cup of local java and other refreshments awaited the adventurous group.



a slight departure delay with Eric taking some extra time to sort out

Participants: Vicky Hart, Eric Ackerman, Dave Cunningham, Gene van Dyck and Peter Oostlander (organizer and reporter)

Brilliant Bluffs

April 18th 2010

Twenty-six met at the Brilliant Park and Ride on an overcast day. The group was able to use a recently reestablished trail linking the park and ride to the Scattebo trail that was severed several years ago when the new Brilliant power plant was constructed. Beginning the hike around 10:00 am, we hiked for about forty minutes before connecting with the Brilliant Overlook Trail. We then proceeded up to the McFee Creek viewpoint and subsequently on through to Brilliant Bluffs. After a sunny lunch at the Bluffs, we looped past the helicopter pad and communications tower and made our way down the trail and upper forestry road. With all of the regrowth that has occurred over the last few years combined with little use of the lower portion of the trail, it was a little tricky to find the trail leading off of the

upper forestry road. The group then completed the hike by skirting past the golf course and down the hill on the golf course road arriving at the park and ride about 3:00 pm. Total time for the hike was a few minutes short of five hours.

The participants were: Bob Dean, Mary Woodward, Kathleen Nichol, Alex Nichol, Kim Charlesworth, Greg Brewer, Wayne Thomas, David Cunningham, Paula Barnes, P'nina Shames, Robin Lidstone, Hazel Beynon, Ed Beynon, Terry Simpson, Jill Watson, Ted Ibrahim, Caroline LaFace, Diane Paolini, Connie Parisotto, Jenny Baillie, Marilyn Armstrong, George Penfold, Ben Aubin, Carol Potasnyk, Janis Gilbert and coordinator, Don Harasym.

Alas, after 3 or so km's we hit snow packed trails and/or running water which sloshed our low cut boots deterring us from completing said journey. However, not to be cut short of this spring ramble, we sauntered back down the trail and took the North Fork side trail to its' end. What with 11sies and lunch, not to mention several stops for photos which took advantage of the dappled sun light, amazing greenery and beautiful yellow flowers of the skunk cabbage.... we had a very lovely day together. Thanks to Brian's GPS, we know we actually hiked a total of 12 kilometers.

We were: Bert and Sue Port, Liz ?, Brian Reid, Marilyn Miller, Brenda Olynyk, Sandy English and myself, Mary Prothro

Sproule Creek

April 21st 2010

It was a lovely hot day (for April that is) and 8 of us braved the wilds (?) of Sproule Creek. Raging waters roared along side the trail, which ambled gently towards the old mine site.

Wapta- Continued from Page 1... Wonderful! I'd tell you about the views, but I had to imagine them instead. Soon, Cecile follows after I am back down. The ski was fast. We traverse as far as we can without putting on skins. This lasts for a few miles, in which time the clouds peel back and reveal a wonderful day. Ahead of us is Mount Olive, and Sky is drooling. I can't help but join him, but like everything in the Rockies, size is susceptible to misinterpretation. The face was not nearly as big as I thought, not that it wasn't nice. Considering the avalanche conditions, we are just lucky to be out here. After climbing over a pass, then up a ridge Sky and I make it atop what we think is Mount Olive. It was not. Further traversing is required. Climbing beside a cornice, we scramble over rock and deep snow to the true summit. By then the sun is melting into the way we'd come, casting bright shimmering pink over miles and miles of territory, laying below and ahead of our descent. Dropping into it was a delight! Cecile is above us as we glide over the flat ice field below the peak. She is soon coasting down bringing our skins, which we had left thinking we would return the way we'd come. Thanks Cecile!!!

To finish our day, we drop several kilometers to Balfour Hut, which rests below a peak by the same name, Mount Balfour, the tallest mountain along the entire traverse, at 10,744-ft. I spent an hour trying to capture a night photo of the hut and the mountain. Unfortunately having lost my shutter release on a previous trip (The Picket Traverse), I was limited to the 30 seconds available in-camera. Nevertheless, being so far from city lights – the darkness permeated the sky with Orion's Belt sparkling, brighter than I've ever seen, jumping out of liquid blackness with a brightness that feels awkward after 10p.m. Our final morning begins as nice as the previous days. No overhanging clouds, but as we've seen they can come with a fury! With Cecile and Sky ahead, I follow as we climb beneath hanging icefalls along a gentle ramp leading to a col. Proceeding quickly, wind pushes from the side, then stops at which point the sun's heat boils us. As soon as the heavy jacket is packed, the wind rises again, a comedy of 'on and off' that has played for this entire journey. Sky is once again drooling, this time over Mount Balfour. I know the glaze-eyed look he gets, the same one I'm seeing when he casts his head back at me to ask, "We should climb this ... it's the tallest peak along the traverse." I can't argue. Cecile decides to stay behind while we climb a snaking ridge to the top. Like Baker and Olive, it takes much longer than we expect, with every rise looking like it will be the last, when in fact there are two more. Eventually we've surmounted the last of them. We are atop! Below is Balfour Hut, behind us are the peaks above Lake Louise and ahead is Mount Hector. Between are an astonishing number of summits, enough for a lifetime! Sky leads the way, and I follow as we reverse our course down the mountain through wind-scoured snow and ice. As we break free of the upper slopes, we glide back to Cecile with powdery snow washing over our skis.

The remainder of the day is mostly descending with a few small uphill on our way past the Scott Duncan Hut. Several miles separate us from our last pass and a few more from the end. A few hours later I am finally across a large icefield looking far down into the



CROSSING BENEATH MOUNT BALFOUR, WAPTA TRAVERSE, 2010.



SKIING DOWN MOUNT BALFOUR, YOU CAN SEE CECILE TO THE RIGHT AND OUR TRACK TO THE LEFT AS WELL, WAPTA TRAVERSE, 2010.

reaches of Sherbrook Lake. Overhead clouds bustle - busily moving ahead toward market, high on the glaciers we'd come over. There is a sparkle in my eye when I have to look away. I can't ignore those feelings; they are why I came here.

Happily we drive our skis forward travelling at the kind of speed that makes skiing so enticing to me. Even as terrain falls away, I take in the changing attitudes of scenery, which quickly fill with scrubby trees, then tighter and taller groves of them. After easy traveling through softening snow, we are at the lake, which minutes before had appeared so far away. Ahead there is more terrain to cover, but it is of no consequence. Quietly we glide across the lake thinking about the way we had come. It wasn't such a lonely place, really. More like a quiet companion whose thoughts are as wide as the icefields. We merely can't understand them. And that's fine. I'm happy enough when she grants me passage into her arms throughout steel blue days and coal black nights like she had for the past three wondrous days.

Thanks for reading and browsing the photos. As always you can see this story on my website as well (<http://cascadecrusades.org/>). If anyone is interested in my photographs, please PM me. You can read more stories on my [Chronological](#) page. Big Thanks goes out to Jason Hummel for letting us publish his story in our KMC newsletter. Check out his stunning pictures at the link above. Thank you to Don Lyon for letting us know about these amazing photos and Jason's story.

Ridgeline Touring Along The Waldie-Curtis Divide: On Skis From Summit Creek to Sheep Creek

Edited by Foxit PDF Editor

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March 27, 2010

There are various ways to ski from Summit Creek (Kootenay Pass) to Sheep Creek: most are low level routes, such as via Waldie or Curtis Lakes, which offer little appeal; however a high level route, along the height of land between Curtis and Waldie Creeks, keeps you above 2100 metres the entire way, offers superb views, and is similar in character to day four of the Bonnington Traverse (the high level traverse of Territory, Colony and Empire Peaks).

By late March, it seemed like most people had long since given up skiing, despite the fact that spring touring with longer days, better stability and clearer weather offers the opportunity for longer and more ambitious tours, so I was pleasantly surprised to have someone besides Doug sign up for this spring ski tour.

Maurice, Graham, Doug and I met at the Hitching Post at 6.30am on Saturday, March 27 and took off in two cars for Sheep Creek FSR. Sheep Creek FSR is relatively well plowed to the junction with Waldie Creek FSR, and roughly plowed for about another 1.5 km. We bumped up the deep ruts in this road to the end of the plowing where we left Graham's vehicle, and then drove back down Sheep Creek FSR and over Kootenay Pass to the lower east side parking lot where the north fork of Summit Creek joins the main Summit Creek.

We followed the powerline for a short distance, then took a gradually rising long traverse to reach the prominent large flat area just below Pristine Pass, where we took a short break, before skinning up and through the pass. As is common in this area, some small slides had run down the west facing slopes into the pass. Once through the pass, we contoured below Wolf Peak and, with another rising traverse, we skied easily to the col north of Wolf Peak at GR967394 (NAD27) where you can look down on upper Waldie Lake.

After a sit down break, where we discussed the recent "Turbo Hill" avalanche and the likelihood of finding "Ozone Dave" - person of interest to the RCMP - hiding out in Sheep Creek, we started our traverse of the Waldie-Curtis Divide. Skiing to the first summit north at GR996404 (NAD27) - which Doug, Maurice and I had been up before - was easy. After this small summit, the ridge turns northwest and we encountered a couple of short more difficult sections, some of which required step-kicking. Doug capably led up these sections, and, as the snow was quite firm and the terrain similarly steep, he kicked in some nice solid steps for the rest of us to follow.

getting a good edge in was mandatory, and it was worth taking the time to de-skin. Once at the col at GR962410 (NAD27) all difficulties were over and we put our skins back on and cruised to peak 2163 metres for lunch.

From peak 2163 there is another two kilometres of ridge skiing, all easy and very pleasant with grand views of this area of the Nelson Range from South Sister in the north to Waldie to the south. We traveled easily along this section, the only excitement came when Doug, walking along a flat section of ridge, whumped the ridge and remote triggered a

size 2 slab just off the ridgeline on a northeast facing slope. This ran close to 300 metres, propagated extensively and had a 50 cm crown - a nasty slide to get caught in.



Above Muskrat Creek, the ridge splits with the southerly arm heading due west to Yellowstone Peak (an optional route out would be to ski to the top of Yellowstone Peak then descend NE to pick up the logging road in Muskrat Creek) which Doug, Roland and I skied up a couple of years ago. Instead, we took the north fork of the ridge, which runs northwest. We had our last snack stop on the ridge at 2080 metres overlooking Sheep Creek and then skied carefully down staying right on the west-northwest ridge and watching Graham's altimeter closely. At 1820 metres we hit the old logging road I was looking for, pretty much right at its highest point. Missing this road would entail much nasty skiing in thick regrowing clearcut. The skiing down to the road, however, was pleasant, open and easy on a supportive crust.

The road was initially easy to ski, but once we got below about 1600 metres the top 20 cm of the snowpack was mushy and getting progressively heavier and harder to ski. Eventually, we skied out to the bridge across Curtis Creek and joined Curtis Creek FSR which sported old sled tracks and offered much faster, easier skiing. The bridge across Curtis Creek has been pulled but there was a good snow bridge slightly upstream of where the bridge used to be that made crossing Sheep Creek easy. Once on Sheep Creek FSR, a quick downhill ski brought us to Graham's waiting vehicle.

Thanks to my companions on this wonderful tour. Graham Jamin, Maurice De St Jorre and Doug Brown, coordinator, Sandra McGuinness.



Words by Sandra McGuinness

tech Tips

Mountain School Tech tips: A BIT ABOUT MAPPING SOFTWARE

I didn't want to title this article *all* about mapping software because I don't know *all* about mapping software packages, but I do know a bit about mapping software packages, as, over the years, I've accumulated quite a few different packages and confess to being one of those map geeks who can happily while away hours looking at maps and planning routes.



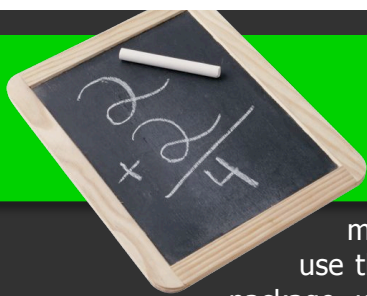
The first thing to know about mapping packages is that they come in two different formats: raster and vector. Raster maps are basically scanned NTSi maps so they look exactly like your old paper maps except they can be viewed and manipulated (routes plotted, notes added, etc.) on your computer monitor. When you print a raster map, you will get a product with similar quality to a NTS paper map complete with labeled grid lines. Some examples of raster mapping packages are Fugawi, Etopo and TopoTracker.

Vector maps, on the other hand, generate their own contour lines and lack the artwork (shading to indicate trees, glaciers, etc.,) and UTMii grid lines that NTS maps have. You can view vector maps on your computer and can print out paper maps, but vector maps are primarily designed to be loaded onto GPSiii units and printed vector maps are typically poor quality, hard to read, and lack UTM grid lines thus making the taking of bearings or locating yourself by UTM grid reference impossible. An example of a vector-mapping package is Mapsource by Garmin.

The second thing to understand about mapping packages is that there are two components: the scanned raster maps and the viewing program. The scanned maps are just that, standard NTS maps scanned and saved in a TIFF1 or PNG2 format and thus are identical between raster packages. The viewing program, however differs depending on which mapping package you buy, but all programs (such as Fugawi, Memory Map, Ozi Explorer) share similar capabilities. The things you can typically do with viewing programs are view maps on your computer monitor, draw routes, generate "tracks", create and export waypoints to your GPS, add notes and print sections of the map. See Figure One for a section of

-
- 1 National Topographic Series, in other words the standard 1:50,000 map formerly produced by the Government of Canada
 - 2 Universal Transverse Mercator, this is the blue grid system on NTS maps used for generating grid references.
 - 3 Global Positioning System, a network of satellites that allows a small hand-held unit to work out your location by the positions of various satellites.

KMC Sch



map 82F/06 marked up using Memory Map. Some viewing packages are easier to use than others. Fugawi, for example, has a very simple and easy to use viewing package, while TopoTracker, which uses the Memory Map viewing program, while having all kinds of features available (such as creating 3D images, shading for north aspects, etc.) is difficult to learn how to use.

So, how do you know which mapping package is right for you? Well, if you want to do is view maps on your computer monitor to plan trips and then print paper maps to take on the trip with you, a raster mapping package will be most useful for you. Things to consider when selecting a package are how easy the package is to use, and what area is covered by the mapping package. Currently, Fugawi has the best deal out there as it covers all of BC in one package, whereas other raster packages, such as Etopo, split BC up into four different zones and you need to buy all four packages to get coverage of all of BC.

However, if what you want to do is load maps onto your GPS and use this as your sole navigation device, you could consider buying a vector-mapping package, but be aware that your printed maps will lack clarity, artwork and UTM grid-lines.

One of the common misconceptions of mapping packages is that you can "zoom in" on the data and effectively increase a 1:50,00 scale map to a 1:20,000 scale map. While you can "blow up" a section of the map and print it at a larger scale (say 1:30,000 or 1:20,000) you are not actually getting more information. The contour interval remains 100 feet or 40 metres (depending on the datum of the map), you will just be seeing a blown-up version of the same map, which, while helpful for aging myopic eyes, does nothing to increase the resolution of the map.

The other thing to think about when buying a package is that both BC TRIM3 data and NTS maps are now available as free downloads from various sites on the internet. So, you could actually just download maps as you need them if funds are short. However, having your own mapping package is much more convenient and allows you to browse and mark up your maps at your leisure.

Figure 1 is a screen capture from a section of map 82F/06 showing the area around Mount Beattie. I've drawn on a route with a series of waypoints, added a mark to indicate the true summit of Mount Beattie, and also added a note about snow stability. As you can see, this raster map is simply a scanned image of the NTS 82F/06 map.

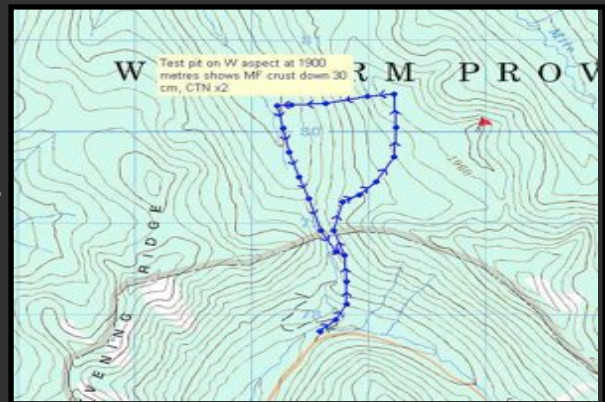


Figure 1: Screen Capture From a Section of TopoTracker

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- 4 Tagged Image File Format
 - 5 Portable Network Graphics
 - 6 Terrain Resource Inventory Mapping

Important Club Information

Membership Annual Dues:

Single (19 yrs and older) \$41

Family (including child under 19) 2 people \$52; 3 people \$58; add \$6 for each additional person

Junior (age under 19) \$31

Send complete membership/waiver form to KMC Membership:

717 Hall St.

Nelson BC

V1L1Z5

To receive membership information by e-mail or to give us your address/e-mail/phone changes please contact: membership@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca

Want to Include something in the email update?

**members-
owner@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca**

Sending an email to KMC members?

members@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca

Want to get a hold of the KMC President?

president@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca

Newsletter Editorial Policy: We encourage all submissions of writings, cartoons, drawings, book & website reviews and trip reports. Suitability for publication is at editors' discretion. Articles and advertisements may be edited for clarity and length. Advertising must be thought to be of interest to members in regard to the outdoors, especially locally. Will use discretion for commercial endeavors.

Visit us @

www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca

Kootenay Mountaineering Club Spring Through Fall Workshop Schedule

*Here is the proposed list of programs run by the KMC this spring through fall. Note that all programs are coordinated by volunteer leaders - **not** professional guides. They are open to all members of the KMC. There may be a small charge for some programs to cover costs, and a minimum number of participants is required for these programs.*

Contact the Mountain School director, Sandra McGuinness at school@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca for more information on any of these programs.

Professional climbing courses are offered by local guides David Lussier and Shaun King. Visit their webpage for more information at: <http://www.mountainsense.ca/index.html>

Trip Planning Workshop Wednesday May 12, 2010 5 to 9 pm Silver King Campus, Nelson

If you find yourself doing many of the same trips again and again, this workshop is for you, learn about the many resources available, both on-line and in press to help you plan new and exciting trips to novel destinations. Bring your ideas for new trips to this workshop to research during the evening session.

Glacier Travel Review Saturday, June 5, 2010 Location TBA

Safe summer travel on glaciated terrain requires a certain skill set, including the ability to build solid anchors, rig a variety of raising systems, and self-rescue using prussic cord. In this one day workshop, review roping up for glacier travel, anchor building and build a variety of systems for raising a climber from a crevasse.

Scrambling Safety for Hikers Sunday, June 6, 2010 Limit six Location: Drinnon Peak

Bagging that elusive summit requires a variety of skills and techniques from choosing an ascent route with the least objective hazard to climbing moderate snow slopes to the occasional use of handlines. On this one day workshop, we will scramble to the summit of a local West Kootenay peak learning and

practicing a variety of scrambling skills including correct ice axe use, appropriate route selection, group and terrain management to minimize objective and subjective hazards, and more.

KMC Summer Trips Schedule 2010

Important Note:

1. Coordinators are encouraged to screen participants for fitness, skills, equipment and to limit group size as appropriate.
2. All trip participants must call the trip coordinator a minimum of 48 hours in advance of trip departure.

Classification of Hiking Trips:

Physical: **A**-easy **B**-moderate **C**-strenuous **D**-very strenuous

Technical: **1**-hike **2**-scramble **3**-scramble, perhaps with some exposure **4**-climb
5-climb, continual belays

Classification of Biking Trips:

Difficulty: **A**- easy **B**-fairly easy **C**-strenuous **D**-very strenuous

- 1** - suitable for all bikes
- 2** - hybrid or mountain bike recommended
- 3** - moderate mountain biking skills required
- 4** - advanced mountain biking skills required; steep or exposed trails.

For more information phone the Summer Trips Chairperson, Vicki Hart 352-6145

REMINDERS: Mountain transportation is expensive – Share the costs. No dogs permitted on club trips.

KMC MEMBERSHIP 2711 Granite Road, Nelson, BC V1L 6V6

Single \$41.00, Couple/Family \$40.00 + \$6.00 per person, Junior \$31.00

| Date | | Destination | Rating |
|------|----------------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| May | 1 Sat | Evans Creek Trail | B1 |
| | 2 Sun | Columbia River Trail Mountain Bike | C3 |
| | 2 Sun | Pilot Bay Trail | B1 |
| | 6 Thur | Kokanee Park – Proctor Bike Ride | B2 |
| | 7 Fri 8 Sat | Kayak/Canoe Trip Slocan Lake | |
| | 8 Sat | Sunningdale Loop Trail | A1 |
| | 9 Sun | Skatebo Reach/Dove Hill Trail | A1 |

| | | | |
|------|---------|---|----|
| | | | |
| | 9 Sun | Mt Roberts | B2 |
| | 11 Tues | Passmore – Appledale Bike Ride | B2 |
| | 12 Wed | Merry Creek Trail | B2 |
| | 14 Fri | Trip Planning Workshop | |
| | 15 Sat | Capella Mine Trail | B1 |
| | 16 Sun | Ymir Pk max 8 | C2 |
| | 22 Sat | Creston Mt. | C2 |
| | 23 Sun | | |
| | 24 Mon | | |
| | 29 Sat | 5 Mile Ridge Hike | C2 |
| | 29 Sat | Vilolin Lake Trail | A1 |
| | 30 Sun | | |
| June | 5 Sat | Glacier Travel Workshop | |
| | 6 Sat | Scrambling Safety for Hikers Workshop max 6 | |
| | 5 Sat | Davis Creek Trail | B1 |
| | 6 Sun | | |
| | 12 Sat | | |
| | 13 Sun | | |
| | 19 Sat | Grays Pk | C3 |
| | 20 Sun | Inverness Pk | C3 |
| | 26 Sat | Kokanee Glacier Traverse | D2 |
| | 27 Sun | Mt Gimli & Wolf Navigation | B2 |
| July | 1 Thur | Wakefield Trail | C1 |

| | | | |
|------|----------|-----------------------------|----|
| | 4 Sun | | |
| | 7 Wed | | |
| | 10 Sat | Mt Gladstone | C2 |
| | 11 Sun | Airy Mt | C2 |
| | 14 Wed | | |
| | 17 Sat | Mt Faith | C2 |
| | 18 Sun | Mt Aylwin | C2 |
| | 21 Wed | | |
| | 24 Sat | | |
| | 25 Sun | | |
| | 28 Wed | | |
| July | 30 Fri – | Devils Range/ Backpacking | D3 |
| Aug | 2 Mon | to Coven Lks | |
| | 31 Sat | | |
| Aug | 1 Sun | | |
| | 2 Mon | | |
| | 4 Wed | | |
| | 7 Sat | Mt Gimli | C3 |
| | 8 Sun | | |
| | 11 Wed | | |
| | 14 Sat | | |
| | 14 Sun | | |
| | 15 Sun | | |
| | 18 Wed | | |
| | 20 Fri | Silvercup Ridge Backpacking | D2 |
| | 23 Mon | Truine & Fays Pk | |
| | 21 Sat | | |
| | 22 Sun | Mt Dag | D3 |
| | 25 Sat – | Mt Presley Car Camp | D5 |

[illegible]