B.C. Mountaineering Club Newsletter

Photo: Ryan Bougie

March 2010. Vol. 88, No. 3

EVENING SOCIAL MEETINGS

Evening socials are usually held in the ANZA club, upstairs room (corner of 8th Ave. and Ontario, Vancouver) starting at 7:30 p.m. Cookies, tea, and coffee are provided.

Tuesday, 9 March - BCMC member Ryan Bougie is presenting a slide show of skiing some of Alaska's big mountains including Denali, Blackburn, Sanford, Atna, and Foraker, as well as BC's Mt. Fairweather.

Tuesday, 13 April - To Be Announced

Maelle Ricker - 2010 Snowboard Cross Olympic Gold
Photo: Larry Wong

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CLUB EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE

Avalanche transceivers - First day - $5 per day for members, $7 for non-members then $3 per subsequent day .
Snow shovels - $3 per day.
Avalanche probes - $3 per day.
VHF radios - $8 per day, $40 per week
Satellite phone - $60 per week or $10 per day plus $300 refundable deposit, all payable in advance, then $2 per minute use.
If the phone is returned damaged, the renter will be responsible for repair costs. If the phone is lost or damaged beyond repair, the renter will be responsible for reimbursing the club the $2000 cost of the phone. Trip organizers should request a deposit from trip participants to cover this cost. First priority for equipment rental is club camps and trips. Equipment is rented from Kit Griffin (604-736-8462) or Peter Gumplinger (604-733-8264), who should be contacted at least 2 days prior to the day the equipment is wanted, except for the satellite phone, which should be arranged at least 2 weeks prior to the day it is wanted.

The **BC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER** is an official publication of the B.C. Mountaineering Club and is published 10 times per year (every month except July and August). All material within this newsletter is copyright © British Columbia Mountaineering Club.

Submissions - of any written, drawn, or photographic material relevant to the B.C. Mountaineering Club are welcome. If possible, submissions should be sent to the editor by email. Please note that images should be at least 60 pixels/cm (150 pixels/inch) for successful printing. Images with a lesser resolution will probably not be printed. Deadline for submissions is the first Tuesday of the month preceding the publication month.

Send submissions to: **editor@bcmc.ca**

Members may upload articles, photos etc. for the editor at: **http://bcmc.ca/members/EditorUpload.asp**

Editorial policy - All submitted written material relevant to the B.C. Mountaineering Club will be published unless the club executive decides otherwise. Submitted material may be edited for clarity or brevity, or for consistency with club policies.

Opinions and comments expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the B.C. Mountaineering Club.

Scheduled trips

Participation on club trips is open to any person with adequate skills and experience, subject to the approval of the trip organizer. All non-member participants must sign a disclosure and waiver form relieving the club and all other participants on the trip from any liability. A trip organizer is not a certified guide. The function of the organizer is to organize the trip, ensure that it gets underway, know the access to the area, and know a route or routes on the climb. It is expected that each person on a club trip has the necessary skills, experience, fitness, and equipment. The organizer may specify certain equipment mandatory for participation in a trip. Any person who attempts to participate in a club trip without such mandatory equipment may be requested to withdraw. Each person on a club trip is responsible for his or her own safety and for checking the equipment used. Please be considerate and call the trip organizer more than 1 day prior to the trip.
If you are given a ride, please remember to pay the driver your portion of the car costs. If you decide not to go on a trip for which you have previously registered, please be courteous and inform the trip organizer.

Trip Schedule

Please check the website for final updates. All trips are ski trips unless otherwise indicated.

March

6: Thar Peak B 2/3
Denis Lalonde 1-604-793-9675
6: Vantage Peak&Mt. Duke(full) C2
Jeff Han 604-616-4593
6-7: Coquihalla Plateau area C3
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
6-7: Cayoosh Mtn to Marriot Crossover C3
Peter Gumplinger 604-733-8264
6-7: Mount Matier (club members only) C4
Serguei Okountsev
6-14: Red Rocks climbing A5
Jane Weller 604 988-3618
13: Bombtram Mtn (Box Canyon Peak) B3
Bruce Cassels 604-617-6774
13-15: Mamquam Mountain (members only) C3/4
Serguei Okountsev
14: Mount Laughington C3
Gerry Kollmuss 604-946-8055
20: Leaders Choice B3
Ilze Rupners 604-222-3720
20: Mt St Benedict C2
Sabine Decamp 778-846-7735
20-21: Mount Moe C3
Greg Stoltmann 604-926-6496
20-22: Mount Garibaldi (members only) C3/4
Serguei Okountsev
27: Mt. McConnell C2
Alastair Ferries 604-329-1637
27-28: Ottomite Mountain B2/3
Don Cann 604 324 5773
27-28: Castle Towers C4
Philip Kubik 604-266-5873
27-28: Annual Powder Cow Neve Traverse C3
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666

April

2-4: Channel Peak C3
Greg Stoltmann 604-926-6496
3-4: Rope Rescue practice (members only) A5
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
10-11: Mt. Rohr (beginner's welcome) B2
Thomas Schroeder
10-18: Winter Ski Mountaineering Camp - Garibaldi Park (members only) C3/4
David Scanlon 604-572-5051
11: Metal Dome B3
Murray Lashmar 604-221-4183

Member News

BCMC Constitution: The club's constitution is available online on our website. To access it select the "**about us**" item from the left-hand menu and follow the **viewing the BCMC Constitution and Bylaws (PDF)** link under the "**Goals**" section.

Grouse Mountain parking: Effective February 8th Grouse Mountain has introduced parking fees for the gravel parking area. The pay fee for the gravel parking is going to be a permanent money grab, and not just a temporary one for the Olympics. The cost is as follows:

2 hour - $3
All day - $5
Annual pass - $30

To voice your disappointment with the manager you can call 604-980-9311, Ext. 0 and ask for Guest Services.

The club welcomes the following new members: Louise Chen, Astrid St.Pierre, Rachel Baldwin, Alison Camplejohn, Matt Everard, Zach Ferance, Catherine Minshull, Paul Torruella.

2010 BCMC Climbing Program

The **BC Mountaineering Club** is pleased to offer **climbing programs** again for 2010.
The program dates are:

Basic	April 14 Wednesday Evening intro.	One day only, Saturday April 17 or Sunday 18.
Essential	April 20 Tuesday Evening intro.	Two days, Saturday April 24 and 25
Lead	April 27 Tuesday Evening intro.	1-2 May, 15-16 May, 29-30 May (June 12/13 backup days)

Maëlle Ricker - A dream come true

On February 16, 2010 Maëlle Ricker won the gold medal in the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics women's snowboard cross competition.
Gold medals are nothing new to this amazing athlete; her career highlights include:

- Three gold and three silver medals in the 2007-08 World Cup season in snowboard cross.
- Two gold medals in snowboard cross at the Winter X Games (1999 and 2006).

While Maëlle is not a BCMC member, her dad, **Karl Ricker**, is a long-time BCMC member. Maëlle shares the same love for the outdoors as her father and counts hiking, mountain biking and backpacking amongst her favourite activities. And she is a great trail companion say members who know her.

From her childhood on Maëlle dreamed big: she wanted to compete in snowboarding at the Winter Olympics, despite the fact that snowboarding was not an Olympic sport at the time. Winning the Olympic gold minutes away from her childhood home Maëlle described "like a crazy dream."

Well, a "crazy dream", but a dream come true. Congratulations, Maëlle!!!!

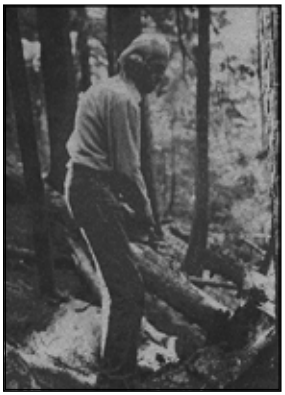
Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Community Health

A recent study conducted by scientists from Oregon State University, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the Pacific Northwest Research Station of the USDA Forest Service indicates that park and recreation providers can play a significant role in the community health by providing outdoor recreation infrastructure such as trails and sports facilities. The findings suggest that improved access to pleasant hiking trails and an ambitious parks and recreation program can help address the epidemic of obesity. However, these same programs are increasingly being reduced due to budget shortfalls.
"The health aspects of outdoor recreational opportunities are poorly appreciated" one researcher concludes.

More information about this study is available at http://oregonstate.edu/ua/ncs/archives/2010/jan/parks-and-recreation-programs-declining-obesity-health-concerns-rise.

Along this same line we can only comment that the implementation of new parking fees (including the gravel parking) at Grouse Mountain certainly doesn't prove a stronger commitment to recreational opportunities.

Historical Members



Paul Binkert 1908 - 1995

At the 1970 AGM Paul's contribution to mountaineering in B.C. and especially his efforts in trail building ("No one has done more to improve our trail system than Paul") were recognized by his election as an Honourary President of the BCMC. He was only the second club member in the 88 year history of the club to be so honoured (as of October 1995) - an honour well deserved: Paul's relentless personal efforts in scouting, marking, building and maintaining trails, as well as his infectious enthusiasm and energy in leading trail work, and teaching and showing others how to build trails, have left the Lower Mainland with a network of trails that would not have been built otherwise.

Excerpt from "In Memorium - Paul Binkert" by Martin Kafer, BCMC Newsletter October 1995

Club Membership - Your Views Matter!

'Go Green' – Let's Reduce Paper Consumption and Save $ 13,000 in Printing Costs

by Werner Grzimek

- Why has the club been spending the equivalent of 85% of our membership fees on printing paper?
- Is it right to continue to cut down a 100 year old tree every two years when we could save money and trees by using the web?

I feel strongly about saving trees, minimizing paper waste and making our web page our main tool for communicating and I would like to find out how you feel about this.

1) High paper consumption generates high printing costs

Our Club Development Committee determined that between 2001 and 2008 the Club spent over $13,000 annually (this is equivalent to 85 % of member fees!) on printing and distributing our paper Newsletter and Mountaineer journal. I estimate that we burnt through about $ 130,000 for printing & paper costs during the past ten years - while purely internet based mountaineering communities (with no fees) became the most serious competitors to our club.

The solution: It's time to minimize the paper production for our Newsletter and Mountaineer journal and free-up printing costs of $ 13,000 per year. Imagine what other, more fun and mountaineering-related things we could spend all that money on!
We should make our web page our main and principal tool of communication for all our members and as an *optional service* for members who prefer their Newsletter or *Mountaineer* journal on paper: We offer the print version at cost.

- The Newsletters are already available on our web site.
- If we add all future editions of the *Mountaineer* journal to the site, then those great trip reports can be searched and read by all current and *future members* on our computers at home.

2) High Paper Usage and its Environmental Impact

From 2001 to 2008 we printed an average of 54,000 pages annually for our Newsletter and *Mountaineer*. That totals 540,000 printed pages in 10 years. Plus an additional 228,000 pages for the "*Centennial Mountaineer*" in 2009.
In a time where around 90% of us work with computers every day, can we really support such an unnecessary waste of paper? Why are we in conflict with our constitution that tells us clearly to '*preserve our mountains and valleys'*?

3) A Green Membership Fee with a financial incentive for going paperless will preserve our environment

<u>The Green Membership Fee</u>
1. <u>Our base rate</u>: $45. A green (paperless) membership fee where all communications (Newsletter and *Mountaineer*) are distributed electronically.
2. <u>Seniors/Youths</u> get 25% off
3. <u>Life membership</u>: $ 800

As all rates are paperless, there is no need for a couple rate as the only reason for a reduced couple rate was that they share one Newsletter and therefore get a reduction. This in effect constitutes already a 'fee for service' concept since many years within the BCMC.

Independently from our membership fees we will continue to offer the printed version of our Newsletter ($ 15/ year?) and *Mountaineer* against cost, just as we sell bandanas, centennial crests or rent out our sat phone.

The result: Trees are saved and every year we can spend $ 13,000 on real, fun Mountaineering!
1. This proposed fee schedule lets members decide for themselves: Paper or no paper. Everyone can choose what suits them best.
2. This will re-allocate the club approximately $13,000 annually which we can use for more courses, train our trip leaders, build huts etc. - instead of paying for printing.
3. Although printing costs are already being reduced slightly in the future, only a financial incentive on membership fees will reduce costs by around $13,000 within one year. Let people vote with their wallets!
4. For many of us environmental protection is a highly sensitive issue and it is unfair to expect us to pay the equivalent of 85% of our fees to cut down trees under the banner of unity or conformity.

We ask our members the following questions:
1. Do you want the club to establish a green policy for actively minimizing the usage of paper, making our website our principal tool of communication?
2. Do you support the club publishing the next *Mountaineer* journal on our Website – allowing environmentally-minded members to opt out of the printed version?
3. Do you support the idea that paper users should pay for their printing costs, saving the club money we can spend on more mountaineering-related projects?

What is your opinion? Let me (wernergr@shaw.ca) and the club executive know - or post your view on our Forum.

Trip Reports

Birkenhead Peak April 4-5, 2009

On the Saturday five of us met at St. David's church in West Vancouver for 7am. The drive to the Birkenhead valley was pleasant though uneventful until we were just about ready to start skiing. We were between Blackwater Lake and Birkenhead Lake pretty much north of the mountain. The basic plan was to ski across some fields to the mountain's base and then ski up into the forest. This had looked like a very direct line to the Birken glacier on the map, but the state of the forest was a big unknown. At least the weather was great and on the drive up the peak had been fully visible and clear to the top.

About five minutes before leaving two things happened that altered our plans, one for the better and the other for the worse though there was a bizarre twist to this. First, the landowner of the fields showed up and said we were not allowed to ski across his fields. He pointed out that the Blackwater Lake forest road was down behind us and this was the way to access Birkenhead although he had never heard of anyone summitting. Secondly, Greg's skins were missing and although he had sort of a plan around this he also knew that it wouldn't be very efficient.

Once the landowner left we packed up and drove back to the Blackwater Lake road which Dave had, in fact, noticed on the drive up. We managed an 11:40 start and soon realized what a good choice this was. We had a rough idea from the landowner where the road went but the really bright point came after two very long gradual switchbacks on a curve to the left when suddenly we found ourselves staring right up the valley to the Birken glacier. Incidentally, Greg's idea of going up through the forest from the valley bottom would have been a nightmare judging by the look of the forest from the road. Shortly after the glacier was sighted the group decided on lunch.

Moving up into the bowl, summit left of centre

After lunch we only spent a little bit more time on the road before it veered to the left. We continued into the forest and up the valley. The going was reasonably straightforward and at about the 4200' elevation we broke out of the trees onto a semi-open flat with views of a headwall ahead and the glacier beyond. The time was about 4:00. Incidentally, Greg's skin dilemma was "solved" by coiling one-cm nylon ropes around his skis and it was enough to get him this far.

Camp was quickly set up with the usual activities. At this point the bizarre twist to Greg's skin dilemma revealed itself as he found his splitboard skins in the back of his pack, thus saving him on the second day.

On Sunday morning it was up at 5:00 to clear skies. The party was moving by 6:40 and was aiming for a central alder covered moraine ridge by which to ascend the headwall. Luckily the alder wasn't too thick but some deviating from the ridge was necessary. The headwall's angle is about 25-30 degrees. From the top of the headwall it was clear sailing into the Birken glacier's upper amphitheatre which is somewhat like the crater

of a blown out volcano. Most of the glacier was only 20 deg., but now we were faced with a 30-35 deg. slope on the summit's left side and a 40 deg. slope to the summit's right interspersed with ice blocks. A pit was dug for the 35 deg. slope with positive results and we switch-backed up where it was slightly shallower directly under the summit's sheer North face. At the top of our West-facing slope we made a brief convex crossing of a more North-facing slope and then curved South into a shallower basin East of the summit. We had to ski to the South end of this basin and then curve back northwards along a ridge to the summit's comshell. Edouard was the first to summit at just before noon and the others joined him shortly. Due to wind we didn't linger long but just down the ridge we found a nice little nook for lunch.

Approaching the summit, looking South/South-East

The descent was nice to downright fantastic. The 35 deg. slope was skied one at a time and actually had a good 30 cm of loose snow on it which required a bit of work but was basically good. The glacier was hero powder and the 25-30 deg. gully to skier's right of the moraine ridge on the headwall was good and also skied one at a time. Camp was reached at 2:30. Although very warm temperatures had been forecast for this weekend it actually stayed cooler, until camp that is. Here the snow finally got slushy.

The group broke camp at 3:30 and the ski out went without problems. The road was quite fast except for the flat at the bottom. Vehicles were reached just before 5:00. Dinner was at the Wendy/Horton's in Squamish. Lucking out, then some lucking in, then lucking out again and finally lucking in.

The crew: Dave Robertson, Andrzej Jarzabek, Edouard Bron, Martin Cook (photos), and Greg Stoltmann (organizer and reporter)

Coleman Pinnacle – Ptarmigan Ridge January 30, 2010

Saturday morning…….5 am, I awoke to the patter of rain. The previous night I received a call asking if we should pull the plug on the trip. It's a difficult decision when the alpine weather forecast called for a freezing level of 1200 metres with cooler temperatures moving in and a dropping freezing level. What to do? The previous weekend conditions were hard and crusty. The concern was skiing on a frozen rain crust. We went for it.

Eleven of us met at the Heather Meadows parking lot at the Mount Baker ski resort. The day started off mild with wet snow falling. As we gained elevation the snow quality improved. Visibility was limited as we made our way to Table Mountain. We traversed across the south slope of Table and made our way to Ptarmigan Ridge, single file with plenty of distance between each skier.

"The white room"

The closer we got to our destination, the worse the visibility became. At one point our lead skier fell off a short cornice. He recovered "nicely" and we continued. We made a high traverse along Ptarmigan Ridge. The slope was steeper than I remembered (30 degrees), and I sensed some nervousness in the group. A long large corniced sloped loomed out of the mist 15 metres in front of us and there were signs of previous avalanche activity. This is where we decided the Pinnacle would be there to climb on a better day.

We retreated to the west end of Table Mountain and had our lunch break in the security of the trees. We were treated to samplings of Ura's delicious homemade beef jerky and smoked steelhead! We decided on a modified return circuit around Table Mountain and skied down through the glades past Mazama, Iceberg and Hayes Lakes. The weather cleared somewhat and we were rewarded as bursts of filtered sunlight began to stream through the clouds. Within moments everyone's expressions changed to happy faces.

We skinned up to the Herman Saddle, and put in some very decent turns and we let her rip with a few "yee haws" all the way down to Bagley Lakes. Snow quality was pretty good considering the temperature hovered around zero all day. We completed the day in the Heather Lodge with hot chocolate and some good laughs. We were all very glad that we "went for it " today.

Skiers were Patrick and Linda Lloyd, Ura Szmylo, Andrew Brown (split board), Brad Badelt, Elaine Naisby (photographer), Thomas Schroeder, Jonah Eckert, Michael Lim (photographer), Nathan Rehorick and Henry deJong (Trip Leader & Reporter).

Introduction to Backcountry Skiing Program

January 30-31, February 6-7 2010

Every year the club runs an "Introduction to Backcountry Skiing" program over two consecutive mid-winter weekends. This year we had one weekend in the Coquihalla and one in the Duffy area.

Weekend 1: Jan 30-31 Zupjok area

We had an early start to the first weekend with a 6am meeting time in Abbottsford. We assembled at the rest area at the Zopkios Ridge Lookout, and skinned up the old road that leads to Ottomite Mountain to the west. We left the road as it began to veer south towards the summit of Ottomite, and headed west up to the col between Zupjok and Ottomite. From there we contoured around the south slopes of Zupjok until we arrived at the col between Zupjok and "Iago" (5700' at GR316957).

Breakfast time

We set up camp just below the col, to the South, and then skinned up Iago and spent the afternoon on its North slope discussing the snow profile and doing stability tests. We finished up with a Rutschblock test, and then the group split up, with half skiing directly back to camp and the other half going for a run through the trees into thevalley Northwest of camp, arriving back in camp just after dark.

Skinning up to Rohr Basin

On Sunday we had another run on the North slope of Iago before setting up to do transceiver practice and rescue scenarios for most of the day.

The whole weekend was in the clouds, with temperatures hovering around the freezing mark. Visibility was usually limited to a few hundred metres, and wet snow was lightly falling most of the time. We were all pretty soggy by the end of the weekend. We had dinner at the Wildcat.

Weekend 2: Feb 6-7 Mount Rohr

The second weekend saw us with much better weather. We got to sleep in a bit this time since we wanted to avoid getting tangled in the Olympic torch relay that would be obstructing travel on Highway 99 until it wrapped up in Mount Currie just before 9am. Our timing was good, and we arrived at the salt shed without delay.

Our numbers were reduced this weekend because Sergio, Xavier and Joseph were not with us. We had lunch in the sunshine at the marsh at 1680m, just Northwest of Rohr Lake. We made camp on the 1860m knoll just North of the lake and then skied down to the lake and enjoyed a nice short run on the North facing slope South of the East end of the lake.

The team

On Sunday we skied to the summit of Rohr. There was some overcast, but we were able to enjoy a nice view from the top. We had a fantastic run into the Halymore drainage on really nice snow. At the little lake at 1960m the group split up, with the keen and energetic (mostly women) continuing to enjoy the powder all the way down to the bigger lake at 1740m, while the rest of the group made their way back to camp.

Eventually we all made it back to camp and prepared for the ski out. It began snowing lightly just as we arrived back at the vehicles at around 5:30pm. It was a strong group and hopefully the smiling faces are an indication that we'll see many of them on future backcountry ski trips. We had dinner at the Watershed in Brackendale on the way home.

Instructors: Ron Caves (photos), Ramsay Dyer (reporter), Alena Dzujkova, David Scanlon
Participants: Beth Denny, Ian Boyle, Joseph Wong, Jeff Ross, Jamie McIntyre, Evan Blasko, Monica Studnar, Isabelle Desmarais, Xavier Charrier, Sergio Aquino, Catherine Minshull, Rachel Baldwin.

Mt. Mulligan February 13, 2010

The weather forecast was a rainfall warning with +30mm of rain in Squamish, wind up to 60km/h, the freezing level at 1500m; the avalanche danger was considerable at tree level, high in the alpine.
This didn't deter 8 snowshoers to go on a trip to Mt. Mulligan. Without a 4WD, we drove up Mamquam SFR for 5mi and turned right at a spur for a couple hundred meters before being stopped by a waterbar. So we started hiking at around 425m elevation.

Breaking trail through deep snow

It wasn't raining...yet... No snow on the ground until 900m elevation and following the logging road was boring.Time to put snowshoes on. As soon as we left the road, the snow was surprisingly deep! We ended up slowly making a trench on the steeper slopes to the col between the North and South summits. The final slope to reach the higher South summit is out of the trees and still steep, so we dug a pit and checked the stability of the snow. Once everybody was reassured, we pushed for the summit. The final ridge had big cornices on both sides. The wind was picking up and it was snowing horizontally. No views. Complete white-out. But all in all, we had better weather than expected!
We stayed 30 seconds for the traditional summit shot before heading back. The only problem with loosing elevation was that the falling snow turned into rain. Still, everyone had a great time!

Participants: Kostantin Beznosov, Tim Gage , Dean Perez, Paul Richardson, Brad Herman, Juliane Frindte, Dorothy Bartoszewski, Sabine Decamp (trip organizer and reporter) .

Snow Anchors, Descending and Belaying Techniques Practice January 9 & 23, 2010

Some of the great advantages of being a club member are the many practice days, where everyone can share their experiences. Stas organized a 2 days practice on techniques to travel safely on steep snow slopes.

The first day, 8 eager participants braved the rain and fog and headed for the slopes of Mt. Seymour. We had a great time practicing placing snow pickets, climbing on running belays, simulating falls, rappelling from a snow bollard etc. To end the wet day on an even more cheerful note we built a snowman and took group pictures.

2 weeks later, the snowman had disappeared.... During this 2nd day, we reviewed our running belay technique and how to move through a runner efficiently and safely. Everyone had the opportunity to set a double snow anchor system and belay the rope partners on the steep slopes of Mt. Seymour. Not so easy to build an anchor in 20 cm of snow over hard ice (or was it the ground?) We need more snow!!!!!!!! Then we simulated distracted climbers who forgot their harness and belay device at home. Interesting setup with slings replacing the harness! We practiced boot belays some more. It's better with a plastic boot, trust me!

Overall 2 nice days of playing in the snow with a great bunch of people. What a great way to learn and practice techniques!

Participants: Peter Malacarne, Jeff Han, Suzanne Landry, Serguei Okountsev, Jos van der Burg, Steve Burgess, Don Montrichard, Sabine Decamp (reporter), Diana Diaconu, Stas Liarsky (organizer).

Skiing down from Birkenhead Peak
Photo: Andrzej Jarzabek

Climbing the North ramp of Mt. Harvey
Photo: Sabine Decamp

Rappelling off a bollard - Snow Anchors Practice
Photo: Sabine Decamp

Climbing the North ramp of Mt. Harvey
Photo: Gerry Kollmuss