

Fall 1971

HIGHPOINTS

Northwest Outward Bound



"Winter is icummen in . . ."

Guess what! Alums are invited to join NOBS in 1972 winter courses. Here's when it all happens:

NW-4 Jan. 5-26
NW-5 Feb. 8-29
NW-6 Mar. 7-28

The expeditions will include ski-touring and snow and ice climbing.

Tuition is \$400. Although alums are specifically invited, previous experience is not a prerequisite.

A pack of rats at play

. . . by Doug Page

Summer found the Northwest Outward Bound Idaho River and Rock Rats at play again. Sixty-nine students and seven instructors spent two courses trying the mountains of the Sawtooth Primitive Area and the rapids of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

The Sawtooths yielded a number of new routes. South Raker, an impressive, apparently sheer, spire was climbed by several patrols; the route is noted for its 150-foot rappel from the miniscule summit tower.

The newly named Mt. Mitchmur (in honor of Kurt Mitchel's first ascent)

produced a fine snow climb, aptly named "So What?" by a jealous second party. Reward and Warbonnet peaks were attempted twice but remained unclimbed by the OB groups. Bad weather and absence of a clear route on Warbonnet forced several patrols to yield. Perhaps next year.

Included in the Idaho course is a five-day run down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. Names such as Rubber Rapids, Gardell's Hole and Powerhouse Rapids are well remembered by those who have paddled them in kayaks and rubber rafts. The box score is enlightening; seven kayaks with fourteen patched holes per boat, seven rafts with four ripped bottoms. Close examination revealed that the rocks of the Middle Fork were undamaged.

Students of N-38 remember the first night on the river . . . without food or sleeping bags. Bill Byrd and his beloved "Beast" (the 16-foot baggage raft) were stranded one-and-a-half miles upstream where Bill and the "Beast" were "surprised" by Velvet Falls. The students arose the next morning in time to feed off the food bags as they drifted by the campsite.

P.S. It is rumored that Bill is planning a "Beast-burning" this fall.



Photo by C. J. Mack

N-33 means co-ed

One of the first courses starting out from Foley Ridge this year was the co-ed course, N-33.

Much to their surprise, after leaving the site of the old base camp and gaining about 500 feet of elevation, they encountered snow. They didn't leave the snow until all of the groups had descended the Sisters into eastern Oregon for re-supply and solo near Pole Creek.

A highlight for one of the patrols was discovery that there is enough room on top of Mt. Washington to spend the night in bivouac.

And those *@#! mosquitoes

. . . by Vern Bush

As has been the case for most of the courses this year, N-31 and N-36 found that the weather during the Mt. Jefferson courses was the most cantankerous personality to be contended with. Deep snow obscuring trails most

of the summer, rain and some high winds (which at one time gave N-31 a definite and probably well-needed airing out) were daily fare.

All of the tries at a very icy Mt. Jefferson finally culminated in a successful ascent through a combined effort by the people in N-36. The groups with Scott Vollstedt and Will Piper were turned back by a shortage of time, but the steps they cut allowed Bob Bauman's and Barclay Anderson's groups to make the summit the following day.

The abundance of snow on the first course provided some fantastic ice ponds for the run and dip. And the mosquitoes on the second course had everyone looking for a place to submerge. I heard from one riddled soul that when the winds got too strong for the mosquitoes, they launched ground attacks until they could get airborne again.

Such tenacity in the face of adversity could only produce challenging courses. That was the consensus of those involved.



The tragedy at Chambers Lakes

"The girls were as well prepared as we could get them. They just made some fatal mistakes," said Northwest Outward Bound's Director, Bill Byrd, as he described the tragic plight of NOBS students Pamela Sullivan, 18, of Seattle; Joyce Ann Howden, 21, of Fall Creek, Oregon; and Lorene LaRhette, 17, of Sudbury, Mass.

Both Joyce and Lorene died of hypothermia as only Pam survived the icy wet snowstorm which, on August 30, interrupted their five-day hike in Oregon's Cascade Mountains.

The three girls made up one of several groups on expedition in this general area when, as Bill says, they "tragically made a number of decisions which compounded their situation real fast."

After having been in the Three Sisters Wilderness area for 15 days, the trio started out alone on a final 35-mile trek over known trails. According to accounts by Pam shortly after her return to the town of Sisters and entries in Joyce's journal, this is what happened:

Following a hike of nearly 15 miles on the first day of their expedition, the girls arrived at Soap Creek, a point just east of the North Sister. On the second day they went on to the Chambers Lakes where they set up a temporary shelter, built a fire and had lunch. While waiting out a shower, Lorene became concerned about the possibility of lightning striking their site and persuaded the other two to move the camp.

When the rain let up, they moved to a point just west of the second of the Chambers Lakes where they

stopped because of poor visibility and heavy rain and pitched a new camp. The three girls remained at this site for three days and nights. Eventually, their clothing and sleeping bags became soaked. And Joyce's and Lorene's appetites waned. Intermittent rain and snow persisted and efforts to start a fire proved vain.

By Thursday morning, all three decided to push on. Only a few yards from where they started, Joyce could go no further. Lorene left to find help while Pam tried unsuccessfully to get Joyce to move on toward the shelter of trees. When it became clear to Pam that Joyce could not continue, she covered her with all three sleeping bags and then lay down next to her. Pam's efforts proved futile; Joyce soon became unconscious and then stopped breathing. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation failed to revive her.

A few minutes later, Pam set out after Lorene, following her tracks in the snow. Finally, several hours later Pam caught up with Lorene who had lain down near the adjacent lake with her poncho covering her. The two girls found shelter in nearby trees where they huddled together for warmth. Lorene became semi-conscious. Pam's efforts to revive her with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage were to no avail. Later that same evening, Lorene died.

The next morning, Pam struggled back to the campsite, not knowing what direction she was going in or how far, but able to follow her own tracks of the day before. By then the storm had broken. Pam gathered the gear, ate some food and, in a sheltered spot, waited.

The next afternoon, under clear skies, five days after the expedition



Pam Sullivan aboard search helicopter

Photo by Eugene Register-Guard

began, Pam was found by NOBS instructor Vern Bush who, failing to locate Lorene or even the route she had taken, packed on all the gear and accompanied Pam back up the trail.

The body of Joyce Ann Howden was recovered by helicopter Sunday. Two days later, following more bad weather and intensive search efforts by a party of more than 50, Lorene LaRhette's body was finally discovered and brought out.

After assisting authorities in the search for the missing girl, Pamela Sullivan, exhausted from her ordeal but apparently in good health, returned to her home in Seattle.

From Bill Byrd, NOBS Director:

The Chambers Lakes tragedy has brought agonizing times to the Northwest Outward Bound School. Words

fail when one attempts to describe the stunned disbelief which characterized our early reaction to the news that students Lorene LaRhette and Joyce Howden had died during final expedition as course N-41 drew to a close.

Searching self-examination is now top priority here. Our own effort will be preliminary to the exhaustive investigation to be conducted by the National Committee under the Chairmanship of Nicholas B. Clinch, Los Angeles attorney, and former president of the American Alpine Club. He will be assisted by Charles Crenshaw and Mrs. Joan Firey of Seattle, and Dr. Jeffrey Duenwald of Washington State University.

During the trying days since the accident, Northwest Outward Bound School has attempted to do nothing to increase the suffering already visited upon the victim's families, friends, and next of kin. We have tried to share the facts as they emerged and not be drawn into premature and destructive speculations on "what happened." We have avoided defending a program which speaks eloquently for itself. We have followed survivor Pam Sullivan's request to avoid attorneys and the press. We have placed our confidence in the proven leadership of Dave Walp, Barbara Eastman, and her two assistants, Caty Huisman and Renee Bonaparte.

Public response, as evidenced by nearly 100 letters and countless phone calls, indicates overwhelming support for the Outward Bound idea and for the courses offered at Northwest Outward Bound School. For this demonstration of loyalty and encouragement we are sincerely grateful.

Instructing the instructors

The 1971 staff-training course was, by general acclaim, the best yet.

Squeezed into the six-day experience was a healthy dose of every type of challenge offered by NOBS, except solo. About 30 instructors participated in the comprehensive and wide-ranging trip:

Starting at the Eugene office with a brief orientation, the instructors moved to Pole Creek Spring for a day of basic woodcraft skills and discussions. The following day was devoted to a difficult climb of North Sister, still completely covered by ice and snow, from the east and north.

The next day was devoted to an exciting run on the upper McKenzie River with kayaks and rafts (naturally everyone got soaked) and an evening discussion. A day of rock climbing at Skinner Butte columns, along with rescue, first aid, and related skills, was the final exercise for the instructors with a "loose-ends" discussion to end the session.

It snowed and it snowed and . . .

. . . by Mariel Brockway

This Spring's Eugene Wilderness Challenge course had excellent snow-cone weather, with fresh ingredients falling almost daily. It turned out to be a real test of survival skills for students and staff alike.

While sitting out storms, they dealt with fire pits so deeply melted into the snow that people had to be belayed to cook dinner. And all became ecstatic at the sight of running water after six



or seven days of scorched snow. Blazes, normally at eye level, had to be followed at toe level — if they were to be found at all.

Most of the solos were accomplished in the snow without sleeping bags, and a few hardy souls, albeit not by choice, shivered through the three days and nights minus fires.

It was the kind of course that will not only be remembered for the usual Outward Bound enlightenments but for the fantastic glissades off mountains, the five-minute summit stops in whiteouts, the cross-country post-holding trips — and the cloudless day it snowed.

it snowed some more

The six courses in the North Cascades in 1971 encountered some of the worst conditions in those mountains in decades (reported to be the worst winter since 1927). Deep snows lingered into August in some places. Giant avalanches had wiped out many sections of trail. Fallen trees were everywhere. The poor trail conditions came as a mixed blessing, however, since we are always on the look-out for public service work.

And despite late snows, remarkable feats were accomplished this season.

Two separate patrols reached the summit of Bonanza Peak, the highest non-volcanic peak in Washington, and a very different climb which has been completed by only 13 prior parties. And at least one patrol traversed Dome Peak, a major peak with poor access — a first for O.B.

By-line — YOU

What are you remembering about your Outward Bound experience?

Whatever it is, it may well be worth sharing with the readers of HighPoints. Because we believe this, we are setting aside the next issue for articles and photos contributed by NOBS students and staff. That means, obviously, YOU! Come on, now. Wouldn't it be a shame if we have to leave blank pages betwixt and between? Please don't put us in that dilemma.

We've already been the happy recipients of art work, journal entries, letters back home and letters to us which recreate the Outward Bound experience far better than we can do at our sequestered desks in Eugene. Sure, we have plenty we can talk about (have you ever doubted it?), but we think our readers would rather see your versions in HighPoints for a change.

Lay it on us. You're the people Outward Bound is all about. Your perspectives of what happened to you up on Mt. Jeff or in the middle of the Salmon or wherever your Outward Bound trip took you are what all of us want to be in on. O.K.? We'll be waiting to hear from you.

Very positive feedback

"It's not school, but there's no doubt in anyone's mind that it is education." With these words and more, Manvel Schaffler, Headmaster of Catlin Gabel School, described the enthusiasm of the 23 16 to 18-year-old students of the private Portland school who took part in a special co-ed course on the John Day River in North Central Oregon in March.

"I've never had more consistently positive feedback from any trip we've taken," Mr. Schaffler continued. "Even a trip to Europe didn't excite the kids this much."

The ten-day jaunt offered numerous adventures for students and staff alike. Veering from the river occasionally for climbing, hiking, bivouac and map-and-compass experience, they were treated to discovery of an Indian

cremation site (filled with skeletal remains, beads, ornaments, etc., semi-encased in rock melted by the heat of the crematory fire), a variety of wildlife (including deer, racoon, porcupine, grouse, eagles and snakes) and rock-climbing opportunities galore (which produced the usual initial apprehension followed by delight in accomplishment and another go at it).

Unscheduled natural phenomena presented members of the group with additional challenges: a hard rainstorm raised the level of the river more than a foot one night, almost washing away the beached boats and equipment; a windstorm with gusts up to 70 mph bowed people and flung a 14-foot rubber raft end-over-end along the beach.

And naturally — participants are already looking forward to an expanded version of this type of course for next year.

A contest: High winds vs. Catlin Gabel students



**North Salem group stoking up
and drying out**

Are you tired of hearing about the weather?

With severe weather contributing an added dimension of stress, faculty and students from North Salem High School successfully completed their initial course with Outward Bound.

Conditions were so extreme after the first day and night in the upper elevations of the Cascades that a decision was made to transport the group into lower areas of Eastern Oregon for a fresh start.

If impressions recorded by students at the conclusion of their course may serve as an indication to future involvement, it would appear that experiential education may play a significant role in future curriculum design at North Salem High School.

Trustees try too

Several NOBS trustees and friends participated in a three-day seminar at the Obsidian Cliffs in the Three Sisters Wilderness in July. They were given the opportunity to observe and to take part in some of the activities familiar to all Outward Bound students.

One evening the group was joined around the campfire by instructors and members of a girls' patrol from N-37 for a general rap session. Early the next morning, a few of the more hardy joined the girls for a "run and dip."

**NOBS trustee John Fray (in hard-hat)
at the Obsidian Cliffs seminar**

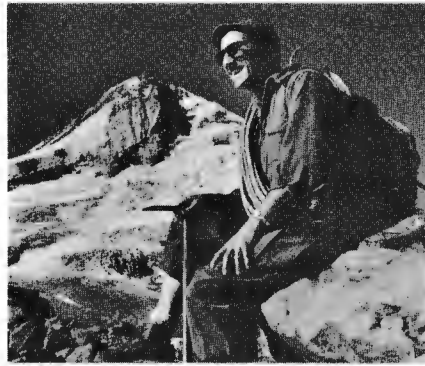


Where is Bill Byrd?

Many times during the summer, this question was echoed by students starting their courses from our base of operation in Eugene. Few actually had the opportunity to meet and chat with Bill Byrd, Director of Northwest Outward Bound School.

The schedule which Bill must maintain, especially through the summer months, is almost beyond one's imagination. Whether dressed in tie and jacket or in jeans and plaid shirt, Bill has, over the years, made continuous efforts which have contributed immeasurably toward establishing NOBS as one of the outstanding schools in the United States.

This past summer, Bill's itinerary has included a meeting with other Outward Bound School directors at Dartmouth, in Hanover, New Hampshire, site of the Outward Bound Center. On his return he spent a few days at the staff-training session and then on to the Rogue River for additional training with instructors who

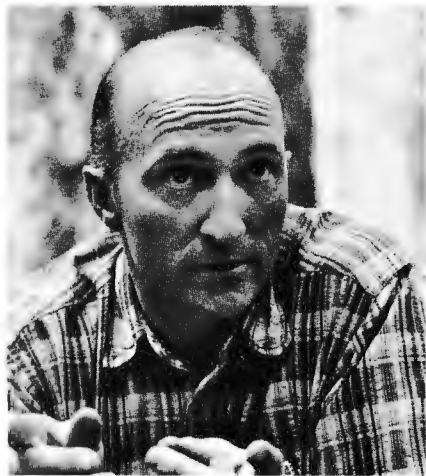


would be with him in Idaho a few weeks later. Prior to his departure for the Idaho Sawtooths, he attended several luncheon meetings with members of the Board of Trustees and prospective scholarship sponsors from the Portland area.

After chiefting the first Idaho course, Bill was once again in Eugene, catching up on his correspondence. Then a three-day institute at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. The last week in August found him back in Idaho, joining the staff and students as they were about to embark on the river segment of their course.

Plans for a five-day end-of-summer expedition on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River for trustees and friends of Outward Bound were aborted by the Chambers Lakes tragedy. Bill, of course, has had to take the helm at NOBS headquarters during the crisis period.

The uniqueness of the Northwest Outward Bound School's program obviously requires the giving of a tremendous amount of time and energy on the part of the person in charge — **where** there's need and **when** there's need. Bill Byrd is the man who's doing it.



Both photos by Jim Hosmer

Behind the Scenes

Do you know the four hard-working women whose conscientious efforts help you and your NOBS courses take flight?



Betty Grove, business manager, is responsible for registration and other correspondence prior to the start of each course.

Kathy Wennstrom, food coordinator, packages all the food and has it ready on the day of departure.



Dorothy Akana, typist, prepares many of the proposals that produce the necessary contributions to our scholarship fund.

Lois Beisell, logistics coordinator, gets everyone's pack ready to go — mittens mended, ponchos stashed and bags stuffed.



Safety for Bigfoot

The following item was gleaned from an old *Signpost* newsletter, published in Lynwood, Washington.

"BIGFOOT PROTECTED — Skamania County has a law protecting the Bigfoot (Sasquatch). Violators face up to a \$10,000 fine. The law is hailed as a landmark victory for conservation by the "Yodeler", bulletin of the Richland Inter-Mountain Alpine Club, as this must certainly be the first time an animal has been protected before it has been discovered."

Was it hot everywhere?

Apparently the Sierras had the kind of winter experienced by the ranges in the Northwest, and the summer must have been exceptionally hot.

When NOBS instructors arrived there in late August for the third year of the Athenian School's junior class co-ed course, the snow had completely disappeared and the course was run entirely without snow practice and glacier travel.

In fact, ice axes were left behind by everyone for the first time in NOBS' history. Not once on the course did anyone find a patch of snow big enough to do a self-arrest on.

Actually, nobody regretted the additional time to spend on the excellent Yosemite-type granite — good rock climbing was no more than a few-minutes hike from any campsite. Some patrols encountered groups from California OB but there was no feeling of crowding.

The weather was superb, except for a brief, exciting lightning storm; and the Athenian students, as usual, were

well prepared for the course. There were no drop-outs for any reason.

Students encountered the usual quota of bears and an unusual number of rattlesnakes but the biggest problem, bet you can't guess, was blisters.

In memoriam

A memorial fund has been established in behalf of Steven Waggener of Veneta, Oregon. Steven was recently killed in Viet Nam and his family has requested that donations in his memory be forwarded to NOBS. Steven's two brothers, Chris (N-6) and Mitchell (N-11) are NOBS alumni. NOBS is grateful to the Waggener family and to the many friends who have donated to this fund.

Cover photo:

This recent gift to NOBS is the work of Jerry Smith, N-21. Jerry painted the OB seal on wood veneer, completely free-hand. It is now permanently affixed to a wall of our office. In the note that accompanied his gift, Jerry commented: "I will be going out into the world, but will have an advantage over others since I have spent a month of my life doing things I once thought impossible."



HighPoints is a seasonal publication of Northwest Outward Bound School, 3200 Judkins Road, Eugene, Oregon 97403. Editor, Ruey Thomas. Articles (unless otherwise noted) by Bill Richards, Steve Wennstrom and Ruey Thomas. Photographs (unless otherwise noted) by Steve Wennstrom.

