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6-18-18

**MOUNTAINEERS PATROL RACES AT SNOQUALMIE PASS: A GRAND
TRADITION REVISITED
COMPLETE VERSION**

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¹ John is a lawyer and historian who has done extensive research and writing about skiing history. His mother, Margaret Odell, was part of Seattle's early ski scene in the late 1930s, and as advisor to the Queen Anne Ski Club from 1938 - 1940, she took her students by train every weekend to the Milwaukee Ski Bowl for ski lessons. John is a long time skier who learned to ski on Snoqualmie Pass using wooden skis, cable bindings, leather boots and rope tows, was a member of Sahalie Ski Club, and has homes in Seattle and Sun Valley, Idaho. He is a founder of the Washington State Ski & Snowboard Museum and serves on its board. John's book, *Early Skiing on Snoqualmie Pass*, won a Skade award from the International Ski History Association as outstanding regional history book for 2017. A short version of this paper appears on HistoryLink.org, the on-line encyclopedia of Washington history.

In February 2014, the Mountaineers recreated one of the club's grand traditions by holding the first Patrol Race since 1941, an 18.5 mile cross-country event along the crest of the Cascades between its two lodges, Snoqualmie Lodge and Meany Ski Hut at Martin near Stampede Pass. The race was variously reported to be 18, 18.5 or 20 miles long. From 1930 to 1941, three man patrol teams competed in the event that was based on military patrol races which were common in Europe. Initially the race was just for club members, but beginning in 1936, Open Patrol Races were held in which teams from clubs associated with the Pacific Northwest Ski Association could participate. Competitors had to carry a 12 pound pack containing prescribed equipment.

1914 - Mountaineers Build Snoqualmie Lodge

The Mountaineers, founded in 1906, began skiing at Paradise on Mount Rainier in the winter of 1913-1914, and continued during the annual Winter Outings which were held in Rainier National Park for many years. In 1914, the Mountaineers built a lodge just west of Snoqualmie Summit above Rockdale, a stop on the Milwaukee Railroad at the western end of its tunnel under the Pass, 500 feet above the road bed. This was a year around lodge devoted to climbing in summer and skiing in winter. It accommodated 70 people, and had a cook and caretaker. It was a steep 1 1/4 mile climb from the old Denny Creek Ranger Station to the lodge during the summer, or a 1 2/3 mile struggle over a snow covered trail from the Milwaukee Road's stop at Rockdale in the winter.²

² 1936 Mountaineers application for membership in the Pacific Northwest Ski Association, which is part of the Bresko Collection provided by the Maybo family. *Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Annual, 1956, page 58, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/.



O. P. Dickert photo
Mountaineers' Snoqualmie Lodge, ca 1930s. Mountaineers' photo by O.P. Dickert, courtesy of The Mountaineers.

1928 - Mountaineers Build Meany Ski Hut at Martin

By the winter of 1926 - 1927, skiing had become so popular that the Mountaineer's Snoqualmie lodge "was bursting with skiers throughout the winter and more facilities were needed." The club looked at establishing a new facility at the Northern Pacific Railroad's Martin stop at the east end of the Stampede Pass tunnel. For many years, Martin had attracted Northwest skiers because of the abundance of snow and the quality of nearby slopes. Skiers could take Northern Pacific trains from the east or west to Martin for a day of skiing, and could stay in bunk cars provided by the railroad parked on a railroad siding just east of the Stampede Pass tunnel. "At Stampede the railroad provides more than a dozen cars for accommodation,

fitted with spring bunks, heating stoves, and free coal.”³

The Mountaineers held special outings to Stampede Pass where members were enthusiastic about the favorable terrain and accessibility by train “(no backpacking!),” which offered open areas around the weather station, the power line hill, and the open timber slopes that were “ideally suited for ski touring that dominated the sport.”⁴

In the June 1928 Mountaineers Bulletin, W. J. Maxwell proposed that the club build a hut near Martin. The Mountaineers Board agreed, and approved \$1,700 for the construction of a “plain ski shelter without luxurious embellishments,” a 20x50 two-story frame building to accommodate 50 people. Edmund S. Meany was a Professor of History at the University of Washington who joined the Mountaineers in 1908, and was president of the club for 27 years until his death in 1935. Meany was “a true renaissance man,” one of the UW’s most notable history professors, a journalist, botanist, State Representative, playwright and a mountain climber. On October 11, 1928, Meany bought approximately 54 acres of property at Martin from the Northern Pacific Railroad for \$125, and donated it as a location for a ski hut.⁵

During the construction of the Stampede Pass Tunnel between 1886 - 1888, Martin was the site of a 200 person construction camp known as Tunnel City containing workshops, warehouses, a hospital, restaurant, and saloon. By 1928, all that remained of Tunnel City was

³ Walter B. Little - Personal Communication, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/comm/little-walt.html; *Alpenglow Ski History - Town Crier*, Proctor, Gordon, *Northwest Ski Guide*, December 1936 (page 6).

⁴ Ball, Fred, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, *Mountaineer Bulletin*, 1956, page 55, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/.

⁵ Stein, *Meany, Edmund Steven*, Historylink Essay 7885.

the Martin station house used by Northern Pacific and a few employee cottages. Materials for the Mountaineers ski hut were brought in by train to Martin and carried to the site by hand, with help from railroad section hands “through the skillful cajolery of W. J. Maxwell plus a small cash contribution.” Construction of the ski hut started in September 1928, and

took two months of back-breaking labor by weekend volunteers. To build the hut, club members became carpenters, masons, and pack-horses hauling supplies by hand uphill 300 yards from the Northern Pacific Railroad at Martin to the Meany site. In addition to erecting a 20 by 50 two-story frame building large enough for fifty people, they made tables and benches, brought in bed springs, mattresses, and other furniture, and even managed to pull a kitchen range weighing 1,700 pounds up the mountain with block and tackle.

The Seattle Mountaineers held a Halloween party at Martin in October 1928, and Meany Ski Hut was formally dedicated on November 11, 1928, by Dr. Meany and 100 members. Much interior remained to be done but the ski hut, named after Dr. Meany, was ready for occupancy for the winter of 1929. “While rough, it was comfortable, with the big hotel range in the kitchen and the pot-bellied coal stove in the main room giving off a cheery glow, on the wire rack overhead wet socks, mittens and other gear dried or nicely browned depending on one’s alertness. Gasoline lanterns furnished light, but after a day of climbing up and sliding down hills, early to bed was the rule, for tomorrow is another day.” The hut accommodated 52 people and was used just for skiing.⁶

Meany Ski Hut was located five minutes from Northern Pacific’s Martin railway stop.

⁶ *Meany Ski Hut Celebrates 50 years*, Mountaineers Annual 1979, page 80; *A Treasury of Mountaineer Memories*, Mountaineers Annual 1994; Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 55; Kellog, *Meany Ski Hut Celebrates Fifty Years*, Mountaineers Bulletin, 1979, page 80, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notesperiod/mtneer-b/; *Halloween Parties to be Held Tonight by 3 Organizations*, Seattle Times October 27, 1928, (page 3); *Mountaineers to Dedicate Hut*, Seattle Times October 28, 1928, (page 10).

The Mountaineers “had excellent cooperation” from the Northern Pacific Railroad over the years, which provided access to Meany Ski Hut at Martin. “Train schedules were convenient, allowing a full day of skiing plus time for dinner and cleanup. A special car was provided for parties of 15 or more and permitted all kinds of impromptu entertainment. Fares were high at first, around \$3.80 a round trip, but were negotiated downward from time to time to a low of \$1.80.” It was also possible to ski into and out of Martin from the highway over Snoqualmie Pass, after it was kept open in the winter of 1931. Skiing the three miles from the Ski Hut to the Cascade Slide on the Sunset Highway just below Lake Kecheelus (11 miles east of the Summit), took about an hour, and was downhill or level all the way.⁷

In 1929, the Mountaineers began its first annual downhill and slalom races, the first on Snoqualmie Pass, and began giving ski instruction and tests based on British Ski Tests at both its Snoqualmie Lodge and Meany Ski Hut. On March 10, 1929, the club held its first ski tournament at Meany Ski Hut. Hans-Otto Giese and Ellen Willis won the cross-country races and were given the University Book Store cups. In the spring of 1930, the Mountaineers held its club slalom and downhill races at Meany Ski Hut, starting downhill and slalom racing in the Northwest. Wolf Bauer won the slalom race and Hans-Otto Giese was second. Hans Grange won the downhill, with Giese placing second and Bauer third.⁸

⁷ Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 56, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/; *Meany Ski Hut Celebrates 50 years*, Mountaineers Annual 1979, page 80; *A Treasury of Mountaineer Memories*, Mountaineers Annual 1994; Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 55; Kellog, *Meany Ski Hut Celebrates Fifty Years*, Mountaineers Bulletin, 1979, page 80, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/.

⁸ Giese, a veteran of the 1922 German Olympic games, came to the United States in 1923, and was one of the fathers of alpine skiing and ski mountaineering in the Northwest.



Meany Ski Hut, Mountaineer's photo by Bob Sperlin



Meany Ski Hut, Mountaineers' photo, courtesy of Steere family.



Mountaineers 1930 cross-country race showing Mary Dunning. Photo by Bob Sperlin.

The Mountaineers marked many miles of cross-country ski trails throughout Snoqualmie Pass, including a 20 mile trail between its Summit Lodge and Meany Ski Hut, which was marked with orange-colored tin shingles high on trees placed so one was always in sight ahead.

1930 - Patrol Races Begin

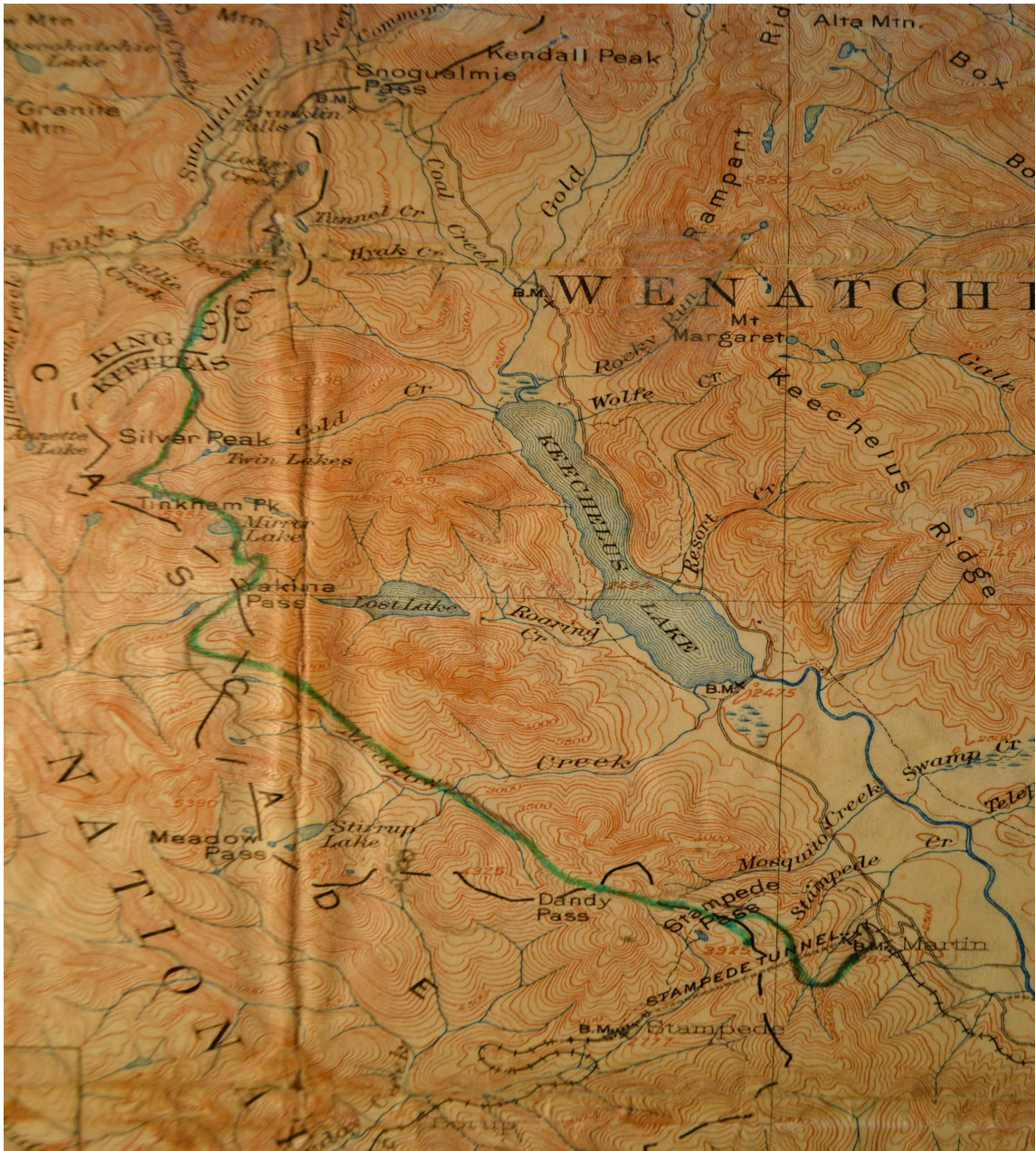
In 1930, the first Patrol Race was held along the crest of the Cascades starting at the

During World War II, Giese was accused of being a Nazi sympathizer and was excluded from the military's West coast Exclusion Zone. Mountaineer Bulletin, April 1929; Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 55, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notesperiod/mtneer-b/; Skoog, *Written in the Snow*.

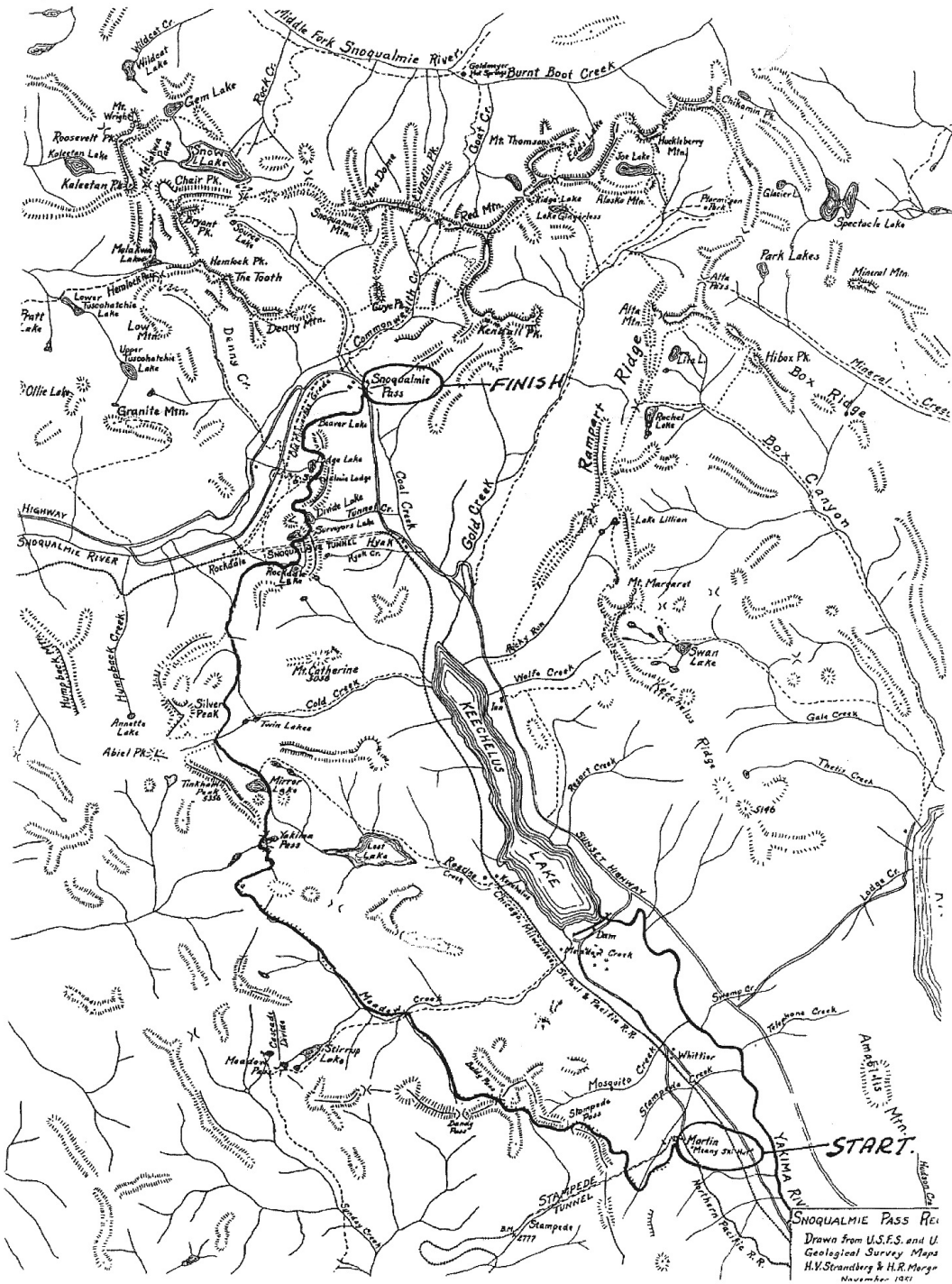
club's Snoqualmie Lodge and ending at Meany Ski Hut at Martin. The race was variously described as 18 miles or 20 miles. Three man patrols competed in the event that was based on military patrol races which were common in Europe, but it was the only one in the Northwest and probably the only one in the country. Seattle newspapers reported on most of the races.

The 1936 Mountaineers Application for membership in the Pacific Northwest Ski Association (PNSA) described the route of the Patrol Race, although it stated the race would be run from Meany Ski Hut to Snoqualmie Pass. The race actually was run on the traditional route, from Snoqualmie to Meany Ski Hut:

The course shall be along the high line route from the Mountaineers' Meany Ski Hut at Martin to Snoqualmie Pass Summit, via Stampede Pass, Baldy Pass, Dandy Creek, Meadow Creek, Yakima Pass, Mirror Lake, Mirror Lake Trail, Silver Peak Trail, the Mountaineers Snoqualmie Lodge and Beaver Lake Trail. The course is approximately 20 miles in length and ranges in elevation from 2,700 feet to nearly 5,000 feet.



Map of 1930 Patrol Race. Courtesy of the Steere family.



1931 Map of Patrol Race, <http://alpenglw.org/ski-history/subjects/P-info.html#patrol-race>

The first Patrol Race was held on March 23, 1930. Before the race was run, the Seattle Times ran an article, *Women Can Ski Expertly as Men*, featuring Mrs. Stewart Walsh, a Mountaineer who was “the first member of her sex to make the hazardous 20-mile trip on wooden runners.” Mrs. Walsh was “a Seattle ski expert and firm believer in the future of Puget Sound as a national winter resort.” She complained that in the past “women have neglected skiing terribly.” Eight years previously, only five women showed up for a Mountaineers ski meet, although by 1930, women were skiing seriously, and could do everything that men could do - except ski jump, which they could do but it “isn’t generally recommended.” That year, there were 150 women who skied and could “do it well.” Mrs. Walsh believed that Northwest women should be as expert on “wooden runners” as their Scandinavian and Swiss sisters. To prove her point, Mrs. Walsh “made the difficult twenty-mile between the Snoqualmie Lodge of the Mountaineers Club and the Meany Ski Hut at Martin - the first woman to perform a feat that has been equaled by only six men.” This was preliminary to the Patrol Race to be held later in the month, where teams would compete for a cup offered by Andrew D. Anderson and Norval Grigg.

Men have always said women couldn’t make this trip. I hope by doing it, I’ve proved their error. I was tired, yes. We were on the way eight hours. But scarcely more tired than I have often been after an unusually active day. I only wish I could have made the trip sooner. I should certainly have organized a woman’s patrol to compete in this year’s race. Next year, though, just watch us.

Cross-country skiing was her particular hobby, since it

is the only way to know and appreciate the Northwest scenery...You feel like an explorer. There are no tracks and none of the familiar summer landmarks. It’s just like being a Viking adventurer.” She said now that women are won over by the sport, children are next. Then roads that are open all winter and more hotels. And then - Seattle will be the center of a winter sports region. One that attracts tourists from California and the East.

A veritable [sic] rival of St. Moritz and Lake Placid!⁹

In the first ever Patrol Race between the Meany Ski Hut at Martin and Snoqualmie Lodge held on March 23, 1930, conditions were unfavorable due to several days of fresh snow. Four patrols entered, and the three man team of Hans-Otto Giese, Andy Anderson and Fred Ball set a new record of 7 ½ hours. The second team included Paul Shorrock, N. W. Griggs, and Robert Hayes. Third was the team of Allan Cox, George Tepley and Robert Sperlin. Fourth place was taken by the team of Ted Lewis, William A. Degenhardt, and James C. Martin.



Winners of the 1930 Patrol Race. Courtesy of the Steere family.

⁹ *Women Can Ski Expertly as Men, Milady Advised to Desert Tea Table for Snowy Slopes*, Seattle Times, March 12, 1930 (page 21).

1931 - 1935

In 1931, no Patrol Race was held. In 1932, the Ski Patrol trophy was won by the team of Norval W. Grigg, Fred W. Ball and Hans Otto Giese. The 1933 Patrol Race was won by “the hard-running team of Art Wilson, Herbert Standberg and Dan Blair,” in a record-breaking time of five hours and 32 minutes, “for a 20-mile trail breaking crusade.” Second was the team of Paul Shorrock, Fran LeSourd and Ted Lewis, which finished seven and one half minutes later. Third was the team of Hans Otto Giese, Norval Griggs and Fred Ball, who finished one minute and 20 seconds after the second place team.¹⁰

No Patrol Race was held in 1934.¹¹

In December 1934, the Seattle Times published an article about the Mountaineers’ plans for the New Year holiday, which many members would spend at Snoqualmie Lodge or Meany Ski Hut. Snoqualmie Lodge was located in the heart of the Cascades, two miles from the Pass on a “fine ski trail.” It could also be reached from Denny Creek by a steeper and more direct route. The attractive Lodge was built of huge logs, and had a large room for dining and recreation, with a mammoth fireplace and many windows affording a “magnificent view of the surrounding peaks of the Cascade Mountains.” There was a kitchen and sleeping quarters for 70 men and women. A cook and caretaker lived at the Lodge year around, and “meals are always plentiful and good and very reasonable.” Meany Ski Hut was located at the eastern end of the Stampede Pass tunnel, and was a very popular skiing center in winter. It was smaller than the Lodge but more

¹⁰ Alpenglow Ski History, Mountaineer Annual 1931, page 76; Mountaineer Annual 1932, page 38; *Mountaineers Hold Races*, Seattle Times, February 6, 1933 (page 14).

¹¹ Alpenglow Ski History, Mountaineer Annual 1934, page 25.

accessible since it was a few minutes walk from the Northern Pacific station at Martin. It could hold 28 men and 28 women. Both cabins were in ideal ski terrain. The Snoqualmie Lodge was close to Silver Peak Basin, which provided “the finest skiing in the Snoqualmie Pass region.” Meany Hut was famous for its “Half Acre,” the steep “Lane,” and the wide, unwooded expanses of “Power Line Hill.” A 20-mile Ski Patrol Race was held each year along the Cascade crest separating the two lodges.¹²

The 1935 Patrol Race was held the second weekend of February, which the Seattle Times called

an eighteen-mile grind along the crest of the Cascades between Snoqualmie Lodge and Meany Ski Hut at Stampede Pass...Patrols of three men, carrying ten-pound packs and specified equipment, compete in this unique event, which is patterned after European military patrol races. Proceeded by a trail-breaking crew which will have several hours start, the patrols will leave the lodge at 3,100 feet elevation to follow the permanently marked but newly broken trail over rugged country that will take them as high as 4,500 feet near Tinkham Peak and as low as 2,900 feet near Meadow Creek Crossing.

The 1935 race was won by the team of Art Wilson, Bill Dengenhardt and Scott Edison, with a time of five hours, 35 minutes and 22 seconds, finishing six minutes ahead of the team of Wolf Bauer, Bob Higman and Chet Higman. Third place was taken by the team of Don Blair, Tom Hill and Scott Osborn. “Herb Strandberg, chief trailbreaker, and his assistants, Jim Bissell, Jim Martin and Art Winder, laid a perfect trail to follow.”¹³

1936 - Mountaineers Apply for PNSA Membership

In 1936, the Mountaineers applied for membership in the Pacific Northwest Ski

¹² *Mountaineers to Spend New Year's in Ski Togs*, Seattle Times, December 27, 1934 (page 8).

¹³ *Patrol Race Sunday*, Seattle Times, February 15, 1935 (page 14); *Patrol Race Successful*, Seattle Times, February 18, 1935 (page 15) .

Association, and a copy of its application is part of the Bresko Collection which is in the possession of the Maybo family of Lynwood Washington. The application described the Mountaineers' participation in the sport of skiing, which is a description of the history of local skiing history.

As a Club, the Mountaineers undoubtedly have played a most important part in local ski history. They have skied for more than twenty years and skiing has been a major activity for a decade. Club members started skiing at Paradise in 1913-1914 during the famous Winter Outings which were held annually in Rainier National Park for so many years. In fact, the popularity of Paradise as a winter ski center is due directly to these outings.

The Club maintains two ski lodges in the Cascades. Snoqualmie Lodge located near Snoqualmie Pass, is a year around lodge devoted to climbing in summer and skiing in winter. It was built in 1914, accommodates 70 people, and has a cook and caretaker always on duty. The Club was the first local organization to build a ski hut especially for skiers. In 1928 Meany Ski Hut was constructed at Martin. It is used solely for skiing, accommodating 52 people. The Hut is less than five minutes from the railroad station at Martin and about three miles by road from the Sunset Highway just below Lake Keechelus.

The club had a long history of holding ski competitions.

Club ski competitions are the oldest locally by far. In all, nine trophies are competed for yearly. Cross country cups for women and men have been raced for annually since 1923, respectively. The Club ran the first downhill and slalom races in this region, trophies for both these events now being in their seventh year. For the same length of time the Club has run a ski patrol race, the only one in the Northwest, and probably the only one in this country.

Mountaineers have had a Club jumping trophy since 1929, but jumping as such, never made much headway in the Club. However it can point with pride to the fact that the Beaver Lake Jumping Hill was located first by Mountaineers. All rights to the hill were turned over to the Seattle Ski Club as it was realized that the latter was better fitted to develop this particular phase of skiing...

Until last year the Mountaineers entered outside competition only spasmodically, mainly because jumping and cross-country events only were available. With the advent of open downhill and slalom racing the Mountaineers entered this type of competition...The Mountaineers are prepared to give an open competitive event of their own this season in the form of an open patrol race, 20 miles in length from Snoqualmie Pass to Meany Ski

Hut.

The Mountaineers sponsored ski lessons and created a system of marked cross-country trails around Snoqualmie Pass.

As early as 1929, a Ski Annual, replete with illustrations and ski articles was published, receiving much favorable comment. A seasonal column in the monthly Bulletin, headed Ski Tips, dates back to 1929 also. Other publications include a comprehensive wax chart which lists waxes suitable for use in this region, and an equipment list which classifies skis, binding, poles and boots...

Ski tests based on the British Ski Tests have been included in the Mountaineers curriculum since 1929. Instruction has been available at both Snoqualmie Lodge and Meany Ski Hut...With their special Ski Outings the Mountaineers have pioneered many new ski areas, and in smaller parties have covered a large part of the local terrain. Mountaineers made the first ski ascents of Baker, Adams and St. Helens and been highest on Mt. Rainier on skis..

Mountaineers have marked and made more miles of ski trails than any other local club. The 20 mile trail between the Lodge and Ski Hut is marked with painted metal markers. A new trail to Silver Peak Basin was made and marked last year. Already underway for this season are painted wooden signs (similar to AAA signs) for all trails and junctions near Snoqualmie Lodge.

The Mountaineers had cooperated with the Washington Ski Club to obtain the National Ski Championships that were held at Mount Rainier in 1935. The appearance of Hannes Schroll at the event was "due solely to the efforts of the Mountaineer Ski Committee...The successes Schroll won in the tournament and the boost he gave to local skiing are well known."¹⁴

¹⁴ On April 13 & 14, 1937, the U.S. National Championships and Olympic tryouts in downhill and slalom racing were held at Paradise on Mt. Rainier, hosted by the Washington Ski Club, a major event in northwest skiing history. There were 59 entrants, 8 from the East; one from the Middle West; 13 from the Rocky Mountains; 12 from California; 14 from the Pacific Northwest; 10 from Canada; and one from Austria. The three best skiers were "almost certain to be selected to the Olympic squad." Local skiers Don Fraser and Darroch Crookes were eventually included in the 1936 U.S. Olympic team. Hannes Schroll from Austria won the 1935 slalom, downhill and combined championships, using the European skiing technique that "beats American methods all to pieces." Skiers were expecting to see a radical change in ski technique as a result of his wins. Schroll used longer poles and skis, with bindings set in the middle,

1936 - Open Patrol Races Begin

The club's 1936 Patrol Race, which was only open to members, had 18 miles of "perfect power snow," and was won by the team of Wolf Bauer, Chet Higman and Bill Miller, "in the record setting time of 4 hours 37 minutes, 23 seconds." The old record was 5:32. Second was the team of Bill Degenhardt, Paul Shorrocks and Scott Edson, finishing in 5 hours, four minutes, 18 seconds. Third was the team of Erick Larsen, C. Spute and Arnold Webster, finishing in 6:11:00.¹⁵

As part of its plan to join the PNSA, the Mountaineers sponsored its First Annual Open Patrol Race, where three man patrols from outside clubs affiliated with the PNSA could compete, to take place on March 15, 1936. A letter the Mountaineers sent to ski clubs described the race. For the first time, the race would be run from its Snoqualmie Lodge to Meany Ski Hut at Martin, a change from the first five years of the race. "Under present conditions as determined from our recent club patrol race, this makes a better race course." The winners of the 1936 club patrol race, "consisting of one expert and two average skiers, completed this course in the record time of 4 hours and 37 minutes over a marked and packed trail." Since 1930, the club had run a 20 mile Club Patrol Race along the crest of the Cascades from Snoqualmie Lodge near Snoqualmie Pass to Meany Ski Hut at Stampede Pass. Three man patrols competed in the event which was

compared to the short poles and skis with bindings set back of the center of the skis used by the Dartmouth skiers. Where the best American skier, Dick Durrance, "clipped close to flags in the slalom race with only a hip wiggle or a tempo turn to miss them, Scholl swung wide," Scholl skied in a "vorlage" position, with legs fairly straight, arms flung back and up, and ski poles held high. He also constantly shifted weight, "pumping rapidly - getting air under his skis, eliminating friction, picking up speed." Seattle Times, January 23, 24, April 1, 10, & 16, 1935.

¹⁵ *Woodward Leads Husky Skiers to Victory, New Record Set*, Seattle Times, February 17, 1936 (page 15).

based on military patrol races that were common in Europe. There would be no entry fee for the race for one patrol team from each club that was part of the PNSA.

The Mountaineers would provide meals and lodging for teams entering the race, but competitors had to bring sleeping bags since only springs and mattresses were available at the Club's lodge. There would be a \$2.00 per man charge for meals and lodging. Competitors would receive Saturday night dinner and Sunday breakfast at the Snoqualmie Lodge, and a trail lunch.

The Mountaineer's Snoqualmie Lodge was less than one mile from the Sunset Highway, two miles west of Snoqualmie Pass Summit. The parking lot was located well below the recent slide area in the Pass, and there was a well marked trail which took 40 minutes to cover. The lodge could also be reached from the Summit by hiking about two miles on the Beaver Lake trail. Meany Ski Hut, the finish of the race, was three miles from the Sunset Highway at the Martin stop on the Northern Pacific Railway. Skiing from the Meany Ski Hut to the Cascade Slide on the highway (11 miles east of the Summit) took about an hour and was downhill or level all the way. Transportation in private cars could be arranged from Seattle for \$1.50 round trip through the club. After the race, competitors' cars could be driven from the Summit to the Cascade Slide, or transportation would be provided back to their cars at Snoqualmie Summit.

Skiers had to be at least 20 years old. Roll call for the race would be at 8:45 am on Sunday, followed by medical exams and inspection of competitors' packs, and the race would start at 10:00.

The course shall be along the high line route from the Mountaineers' Meany Ski Hut at Martin to Snoqualmie Pass Summit, via Stampede Pass, Baldy Pass, Dandy Creek, Meadow Creek, Yakima Pass, Mirror Lake, Mirror Lake Trail, Silver Peak Trail, the

Mountaineers Snoqualmie Lodge and Beaver Lake Trail. The course is approximately 20 miles in length and ranges in elevation from 2,700 feet to nearly 5,000 feet.

Although the application said the race would start at Meany Ski Hut at Martin and end at Snqoualmie Summit, the route actually run was the traditional one which started at the Mountaineers Lodge on Snoqualmie Pass and ended at Meany Ski Hut at Martin.

Each contestant had to carry a pack weighing not less than 12 pounds, to include emergency rations, compulsory and optional equipment. Emergency rations consisted of a package of raisins and a can of canned beef. Compulsory equipment consisted of a light axe, two compasses, one watch, three new plumber's candles, 50 feet of 1/4 " manila rope, a first aid kit, a map of the district, an electric flashlight, a waterproof container containing strike-anywhere matches, and snow glasses. Clothing was prescribed by the Club, which had to consist of shoes, sox, underwear, pants or knickers, shirt or jersey, jacket or parka, headgear and mitts. In addition, each contestant had to carry an extra sweater or jacket, mitts and wool sox. Any type of pack could be used, but packs would be inspected and weighted before and after finish of the race. Any kind of skis could be used but racing skis were not recommended.

Artificial aids to climbing other than wax are prohibited...The entire course must be covered on skis. A competitor can exchange broken sticks or bindings but cannot change more than one broken ski. Waxing skis or repairing skis or bindings during the race must be done without the aid of anyone other than members of contestant's patrol.

Starting order would be determined by lot, and starts would be at intervals determined by the Race Committee. The three skiers in each patrol had to start together, and the starting time was when the signal was given. Each patrol would be furnished with a map of the course, and would be checked at posts along the course, located at Blady Pass, Mirror Lake, and Snoqualmie Lodge. All three patrol members must be checked in at the posts within an interval of one

minute of each other, and all three members of a patrol had to finish within an interval of one minute, or the patrol would be disqualified. The patrol's finishing time would be the time when its last member finished.

A Ski Patrol Trophy would be won by the team with the shortest elapsed time. Names of the winning patrol would be engraved on the trophy, which would be held by the club sponsoring the team for the ensuing year. Medals would be given to the members of the winning patrol.

Five three men patrol teams entered the first Open Patrol Race run held on March 15, 1936, which was widely publicized. The Seattle Times said,

on the theory that ski development lies in the presentation of problems difficult even to the superior skier, the Mountaineers present their own idea, next Sunday, of what it takes to make a skiing man: the 18-mile, three man Patrol Race...This is the Mountaineers' opening bid to all the clubs of the Pacific Northwest Ski Association. The Mountaineers were voted into that association a week ago at Mount Hood, Oregon. There are numerous obligatory details included in their invitation, sent to each of the member clubs of the association...

Suffice it to say that the race, difficult as it may seem, is more of a test of skiing than many that have preceded it. It runs from Snoqualmie Lodge of the Mountaineers to Martin; it contours that high, gleaming ridges of the Cascade Range; it goes from the low to the moderately high, back to the low, up to the high, and then sweeps down. "You push the middle valve here!" said Bob Hayes, director of skiing for the Washington Ski Club, who made a surveying trip along the course. "But you can't realize what's coming out until you've made the trip. It's marvelous."¹⁶

The 1936 Open Patrol Race was described as the "nation's longest and hardest ski race." No one under 20 could enter, as the course was considered too severe for youngsters. The race was held in less than perfect conditions, with warm weather and 15 inches of new snow. "Hard slogging" was the lot of the three man teams, in the first ever open Patrol Race held in the United States. "That made the competition add up to the strongest, and heaven help the unfortunate

¹⁶ *Mountaineers' Ski Patrol Due*, Seattle Times, March 8, 1936 (page 19).

trail-breakers, who must make an eighteen-mile trail.” The Seattle Ski Club team consisting of Roy Nerland, Howard Dalsbo and Ole Tierdal won the event, finishing in four hours, 50 minutes and 37 seconds, beating the second place College of Puget Sound team by four hours. “The eighteen-mile cross-country race is a tough race, particularly in the heavy snow that marked yesterday’s event. The Scandianian racers still know a great deal more about cross-country than the hometown boys.” Tyverdal and Dalsbo wore racing skis. Dalsbo pulled a tendon in his knee ten miles from the finish but “gamely finished.” Their time did not equal the record time of four hours, 37 minutes set earlier in 1936, by Wolf Bauer, Bill Miller and Chet Higman. It was thought the CPS team turned back, but they arrived at Martin nine hours after leaving the Snoqualmie Lodge, and were the only other team that finished the race intact. The 18 mile race was “a grueling haul designed only for the best cross-country racers of each club,” given the wet heavy snow conditions the racers experienced. The Washington Ski Club team of Hans-Otto Giese, Pat Patterson and Alf Moystad was disqualified when a member broke a ski and borrowed an emergency ski tip from another team, since the rules specified that no patrol may accept assistance from another patrol. The Seattle Mountaineers team of Wolf Bauer, Bill Miller and Scott Edson was disqualified when Miller became ill and was convinced to return to Snoqualmie. The team went on, Miller got better and followed but finished well behind his other teammates. The rules specified that all members of a patrol must finish within one minute of each other. Had the team waited for Miller, they would have finished second. One of the Everett Mountaineers team became ill and had to return to Snoqualmie.¹⁷

¹⁷ *Mountaineers’ Marathon Ski Racers All Set*, Seattle Times, March 13, 1936; *Patrol Race to Test Skiers on 18-mile Course*, Seattle Times, March 15, 1936; *Teams Set Out on Heavy Trip*, Seattle Times, March 14, 1936 (page 5); *Seattle Club’s Patrol Team in 18-Mile Victory*,

1937

In November 1936, the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association recognized the “grueling Mountaineers patrol race” from its summit lodge to the Meany Ski Hut at Martin, as the 1937 Northwest Championship. Teams were expected from at least six clubs, Cascade, Spokane, Leavenworth, Washington Ski Club, Seattle Ski Club, and the Mountaineers. Peter H. Hostmark, president of the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association, was leaving for Chicago for a National Ski Association meeting. Hostmark was prepared to invite the National Ski Association to hold its 1937 meeting in Seattle, and to present the bid of the Seattle Ski Club for the 1940 National jumping and cross-country championships and Olympic trials in those events.¹⁸

The Second Mountaineer’s Open Patrol Race held on March 7, 1937, was described as “a grueling haul, designed only for the best cross-country racers of each club.” The teams started at five minute intervals beginning at 9:00 am, and because of the lateness that some teams finished the prior year, all teams not past the half-way mark by 2:00 would be turned back. The race was won by the Mountaineer’s team of Wm. A. Degenhardt, Scott Edson and Sigurd Hall, in a time of 5 hours, 12 minutes, 5 seconds, on a crusty course. The Seattle Ski Club team of Roy Nerland, Ole Tverdal and Martin Tverdall was second, finishing in a time of 5:54: 20. The College of Puget Sound team was third, and the Everett Mountaineers were fourth.¹⁹

Seattle Times, March 16, 1936 (page 15); Alpenglow Ski History - Mountaineer Bulletin, 1930 - 1939, *Ski Tips*, April 1936 (page 4).

¹⁸ *Mountaineers’ Class Resumes, & Seattle Bids for Tourney*, Seattle Times, November 18, 1936 (page 32).

¹⁹ *Patrol Race Long*, Seattle Times, March 4, 1937 (page 20); *Patrol Teams Enter, Snoqualmie Pass*, Seattle Times, March 8, 1937 (page 14); Alpenglow Ski History - Mountaineer Bulletin, 1930 - 1939, *Ski Tips*, May 1937 (page 6).

1938

The Seattle Times described the tough conditions of the Patrol Race in February 1938, saying:

No audience will watch them, for their course doesn't run past any grandstand; but a small group at the finish will cheer six three-man ski teams...at Martin, far up in the Cascades, when they cross the line in the third annual Northwest Patrol Race championships.

They'll have earned it. To reach Martin, twenty miles from their start at Snoqualmie Lodge of the Mountaineers, they must climb several times, to heights of 1,000 to 3,000 feet. They'll be downhill trails, of course...eleven miles in all. But they come dearly, when the teams are slugging their way along as fast as wind and muscle will permit.

Seven ski patrol teams entered in "the Pacific Northwest patrol race championships," including teams from Seattle Ski Club, Sahalie Ski Club, Fjeld Ski Club of Conway, Mountaineers, two from the University of Washington, and the Washington Ski Club.²⁰

"Twenty miles of ice lay back of the Mountaineers' three-man ski-patrol team (Scott Edson, Sigurd Hall and Art Wilson) when they tore into Martin yesterday afternoon, first in the Northwest patrol race championships." Their time was 4 hours, 57 minutes and 45 seconds, "[i]t wasn't the record, or even close to it, but it was for the sort of skiing conditions encountered." The University of Washington team consisting of Tom Hill, Walt Page and Harold Stack was second, with a time of 5 hours, 51 minutes. The Sahalie Ski Club team was third finishing at 6 hours, 6 minutes, and the Seattle Independents were fourth with a time of 6 hours, 10 minutes, 30 seconds. Two teams failed to finish, the Seattle Ski Club team (Roy Nerland, Erik Bolstand and

²⁰ *Patrol Race on Program Today*, Seattle Times, February 7, 1938 (page 16).

Victor Larden), and the Fjeld Ski Club of Stanwood.²¹

Major improvements were made to Meany Ski Hut in 1938 and 1939. In the autumn of 1938, Mountaineer members “labored mightily” to widen the lane at the Meany Ski Hut at Martin and install a rope tow up the big ski trail that went about 65% up the hill, which brought “a major change in the Meany way of life.” The new ski lift was 835 feet long, rising 310 feet in two minutes, was powered by a Fordson Tractor, and was designed so skiers could get off at any level. In autumn of 1939, members built a 24 x 30-foot, three-story addition to Meany Ski Hut, which increased its capacity to 75 people. The new addition had a basement with a furnace, drying room, waxing room, and inside plumbing “at last.” The kitchen was moved to the west end of the building. The main floor had a recreation room with a ping pong table, a phonograph, and space for dancing or games. The second floor became sleeping quarters for men, and the third floor had quarters for married members. A motor-generator and wiring were added for electric lights, replacing the gasoline lanterns previously used, “so life at Meany had indeed changed considerably.”²²

1939 Patrol Race

Both the Seattle Times and P.I. described the difficulty of the race before the 1939 Open

²¹ *Sahalie Club Defeat Mountaineers*, Seattle Times, February 13, 1938 (page 13); *Patrols Ready*, Seattle Times, February 25, 1938 (page 24); *Patrol Race on Program Today*, *Patrol Race on Program Today*, Seattle Times, February 27, 1938 (page 16); *Ski Patrol Race Tough, Mountaineer Team Takes First Place*, Seattle Times, February 28, 1938 (page 14).

²² *Another Lift for Ski Clan is Constructed*, Seattle Times, November 16, 1938 (page 17); Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 56, & Kellog, *Meany Ski Hut Celebrated Fifty Years*, 1979, pages 85 - 88, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/; Ball, *The Story of Meany Ski Hut*, Mountaineer Bulletin, 1956, page 56, & Kellog, *Meany Ski Hut Celebrated Fifty Years*, 1979, pages 85 - 88, Alpenglow.org/ski-history/notes/period/mtneer-b/.

Patrol race. The Seattle Times said it was

slightly crazy to the lay skier, but maybe it's time to deliver a short and not too heavy sermon on its excellence - and the serious purpose behind it all. The Patrol Race breeds weather-wise and snow-wise skiers. They are required by the rules of the race to carry all the equipment necessary for any unexpected but enforced delay in their travel; an ax; food; rope and supplies; an extra array of clothing. But to simplify their crossing of the Cascades' rugged slope; they must also have snow-sense; how to wax for a twenty-mile journey; how to beat the dickens, but conserve enough strength for a stanch finish, in other words, how to conduct themselves in the mountains.

Mike Donahoe described the race's difficulties in the Seattle P.I.

Its an odds-on, mortal cinch that the most-tuckered out gang of ski racers in North America will huddle around a stove in Meany Ski Hut near Martin tomorrow at the close of the Mountaineers' fourth annual patrol race from Snoqualmie Pass. The Mountaineers' patrol race is an event unique in Northwest skiing. The patrol race is a copy of the annual free-for-all staged by the Alpine troops at the conclusion of winter maneuvers. It's a team affair. There is no such thing as an individual star in a patrol race. There may be..and often, too...a goat.²³

Seven three-man patrol teams entered the 1939 race, representing the Seattle Ski Club, Mountaineers, Washington Ski Club, University of Washington, Sahalie Ski Club, Fjeld Ski Club, Penguin Ski Club, and an Independent team. Some clubs entered two teams. The race was won by the Seattle Ski Club team of Sigurd Hall (who changed his allegiance), Bert Mortensen and Roy Nerland, in a time of 4:59:20. Cheers were given to the trail-breakers for the race, Art Winder, Johnny James and Paul Shorrock, who had to proceed the teams by an hour and a half breaking the trail for the following racers, and made the winners' speedy run possible.

A skier naturally travels faster on an already-broken trail; and by the time Winder's men had reached the summit of Dandy Pass and were on their way down, the racers were keening along, right back of them. It was a terrific battle. The trail-breakers punched along, fast as they could. But here came the Seattle Ski Club team, the eventual winner.

²³ *Ski Teams To Race, 20-Mile Jaunt in Instructive*, Seattle Times, February 18, 1939 (page 10); *Uphill and Downdale: Patrol Race on Tomorrow*, Seattle P.I., February 18, 1939, *Alpenglow Ski History - Seattle P.I. and Seattle Times - Mountaineers Patrol Race*.

They overtook the trail-breakers five minutes from Martin - and broke the rest of its trail in.²⁴

1940 Patrol Race

Seven teams entered the “rough and tough scramble,” the 1940 Patrol Race - the Washington Alpine Club, the Seattle Ski Club, Washington Ski Club, the University of Washington, Mountaineers, Ptarmigan Climbing Club, and the Bremerton Ski Cruisers. “It’s quite a stunt, especially when one considers the fact that most of the Northwest skiers are apparently very much downhill-slalom minded and adverse to getting off the beaten practice slopes.” The team members had to keep within one minute of each other, and the teams were checked at Mirror Lake, Baldy Pass and the finish, and “if there’s more than a minute separating any two of them, the whole team’s just out of luck.” The Washington Alpine Club team (Carlton Greenfield Grant Lovegrom and Al Wilson) won the race over a mushy course consisting of 20 miles of rough going, in a time of 5 hours, 13 minutes. The defending champion team from Seattle Ski Club (Ole Teverdal, Erik Bolstad and Leif Flak) finished a half hour behind, followed by the the Washington Ski Club team (Bog Higman, Hugh Bauer and Otto Trott), who finished five minutes later.²⁵

1941 - Last Patrol Race Held

²⁴ *Ski Teams To Race, 20-Mile Jaunt in Instructive*, Seattle Times, February 18, 1939 (page 10); *The Timer Has the Last Word*, Seattle Times, February 21, 1939 (page 11); *Alpenglow Ski History - Mountaineer Bulletin, 1930 - 1939*, *Ski Tips*, April 1938 (page 4), & June 1939 (page 4)

²⁵ *Ski Patrols in Trek Tomorrow*, Mike Donahoe, Seattle P.I., March 2, 1940, *Alpenglow Ski History - Seattle P.I. and Seattle Times - Mountaineers Patrol Race*; *Ski-Patrol Race Due Tomorrow*, Seattle Times, March 2, 1940 (page 8); *Alpine Club Skiers Win Patrol Race, 1939 Winners Finish Second in 20-Mile Race*, Seattle Times, March 4, 1940 (page 17).

The 1941 Mountaineers Patrol race attracted five teams, including two 15th Infantry Army Ski Patrols from Longmire, as the Seattle Times said “the he-man wanted sign” went up. For the second time in two years, the Washington Alpine Club team won, finishing the “grueling” 18 mile course in five hours and 27 minutes. The team consisted of Al Wilson, Grant Lovegren and Carleton Greenfield, who two years before picked the patrol race as one event “in which they could beat the Fancy Dans of the ski sport.” “It was a nice day for a picnic, but not for eighteen long miles of langlauf...It was icy all the way except for a few open slopes which had been hit by the sun, and they were few and far too few.” An Army Ski Patrol team from Camp Nisqually, Mount Rainier, finished second, with a time of five hours and 46 minutes. The Mountaineers team was third, with a time of 5 hours, 59 minutes, 40 seconds. All five teams arrived at the finish within one hour’s time of each other, but the Bremerton Ski Cruisers team (Jack Satland, Robert R., Henderson and Bob Johnson) and the University of Washington team (Bob Behkne, John Scott and John Woodin) were disqualified when they got off course at Stampede and approached the Meany Ski Hut finish at Martin by the wrong route. “They deserve a cheer for their efforts ‘officially’ gone haywire.”

Legs were “shot” when the patrols reached the Meany Lane run to the finish line, check turns were difficult on the icy going, and most of the tired patrol members staged a sprawling act of the officials gathered at Meany Ski Hut.

But the main story is: Three fellows who climbed mountains together had an idea they could deliver the goods in a he-man event where no three-man patrol is stronger than its weakest link, and they proved it was a good idea for the second-straight year.²⁶

The 1941 Patrol Race was the last one held. In June 1941, the Mountaineers’ Board

²⁶ *Mountaineer Patrol Race Slated Sunday*, Seattle Times March 4, 1941 (page 21), *Washington Alpine Patrol Repeats in Langlauf Ski Event*, Seattle Times, March 10, 1941 (page 17).

voted to discontinue the patrol races due to a lack of interest, as the Club's Ski Committee reported on the general lack of interest in competition. An article in the Seattle Times in December 1944, *Pacific Northwest is Skiers' Paradise*, called the Mountaineers Patrol Races "one of the year's great competitive events."²⁷

2014 Patrol Race

On February 8, 2014, the Mountaineers held its first Patrol Race since 1941. The race was coordinated by Nigel Steere, whose grandparents were involved with the Mountaineer's Meany Ski Hut at Martin in the early 1930s. Nine three man teams, and one two man team (whose third member was unable to race because of an injury), started at 10 minute intervals from the base of the chairlifts at Summit West, between 6:00 and 8:00 AM. A three woman team entered but according to Lowell Skoog, only one woman, Anne Brink, finished from that team. She tagged along with the Wenatchee team ("Slow, Slower and Slowest") near the end. She is thought to be the first woman to complete the route during a formal race.

The Patrols raced under cool crisp blue skies over six inches of new snow on top of a firm base. Seven three man teams and the two man team finished. The winning team consisted of Cody Lourie, Jed Yeiser and Luke Shy, who finished in 7:09, beating the second place team by 20 minutes. The two man team consisting of Lowell Skoog and Brandon Kern finished in 5:39, but their time didn't count since they lacked a third member of the team. "Meany Lodge welcomed them with cheers, awards, hearty dinner, and a warm night's sleep after race temperatures and winds in the teens," according to the official report of the race.

²⁷ Alpenglow Ski History - Mountaineer Bulletin, June 1941 (page 3); *Pacific Northwest is Skiers' Paradise*, Seattle Times, December 10, 1944 (page 42).

The Mountaineers sent the race results to Wolf Bauer, who was celebrating his 102nd birthday, and was eager to learn whether his 78 year old race record of 4 hours, 37 minutes had been broken; it had not.

The Mountaineers plan to run the Patrol race in future years when snow conditions permit it.



Winners of 2014 Patrol Race, Cody Lourie, Jed Yeiser and Luke Shy. Photo courtesy of The Mountaineers.



Brandon Kern breaking trail across Mirror Lake in 2014 Patrol Race. Photo courtesy of Lowell Skoog.