



KONGSBERGER NEWS

July 2007

MARK YOUR CALENDARS ...

Women's weekend September 8-9. Trail work weekends September 15-16 and 29-30, October 13-14 and 27-28. Details to come.

SUMMER HIKING SCHEDULE ...

A couple of hikes are already in the books, but a couple more are coming up for you to test your leg muscles and lung capacity.

Sunday, August 5th, Defiance via Olallie-Pratt Saddle. 4000 feet and 12 miles. Meet at 8:00 am at Pratt Lake trailhead. Take exit 47 from eastbound I-90. Drive over the highway, turn left and drive the short distance to the parking lot.

Sunday, August 26th, The 25th Annual Ordeal Hike, a Kongsberger Classic. 6000 feet and 26 miles. Meet at 7:00 am at the Pacific Crest trailhead, which is just north of I-90. Take exit 52 from eastbound I-90, turn left and drive a short distance on the Alpental Road. Take the first right turn to the parking lot. There is a lengthy car shuttle to the Lake Kachess campground, so please be on time. All prior cautions, disclaimers and warnings about this hike apply. Everyone is welcome, but you should know that this trip is very long and difficult. The views are stunning, but we will move fast and take few breaks. Warm-up hikes or trail runs are essential before doing this one. Again, this hike is very challenging.

BANDERA MT. HIKE, JULY 15, 2007, BY JOAN NORDHEIM...

Six Kongsbergers met at 8 am at the Mason Lake Trailhead: Jim Lindsey, Kare and Aase, Koll Hagen, Ozzie and Joan. The air was cool and everyone was anticipating a pleasant hike. The trail starts climbing immediately, and extra clothing was soon removed. The trail was wide and smooth, and only moderately steep for the first two miles, and then we reached the cutoff for Bandera Mt, which looked like a mountain goat trail. Kare and Aase decided to head for Mason Lake instead of Bandera. The views were great for the last mile and a half to the summit, but the mosquitoes and flies were very hungry and would not let us alone for one minute. The trail was so steep and rocky that hiking poles were almost a hazard. Because of the bugs we didn't linger at the summit, so the four of us headed down and were back at the parking lot by 11:45. Ozzie, Koll and I were on our way to the Dairy Freeze in North Bend by noon. I checked in with the Gjølmeslis on their cell phone, and they had had a lovely time at Mason Lake and were on their way back out. Lindsey commented that Bandera Mt. was a "nice little starter hike" for the hikes to come this summer.

GROOMING REPORT, BY DAVE NEWTON...

Shirley and Dave Newton and Tim Melbourne attended the Friday night meeting of Winter Recreation Advisory Committee (WRAC) in Ellensburg in July as representatives of KSC. As none of us were there on Saturday, I called Colleen Maguire in Olympia this morning. The final outcome of the meetings is that Lake Easton State Park will continue to do the grooming for the I-90 corridor with grooming to be done six days a week. A "Grooming Committee" will be formed with representation of interested parties along I-90. This group will meet once a month to exchange notes on how the grooming is being done and will report back to Tim Schmidt at Lake Eason and to Colleen Maguire in Olympia.

The cost of the Sno-Park permit has been increased. The permit with grooming will be \$60.00 per year which is an increase of \$20.00 over last year. The day permit will be raised from \$8.00 to \$10.00 per day. These are per carload costs and still are the best bargains in the world, especially as we will be getting grooming six days a week.

All of this will be discussed at the first Club meeting this fall, by which time more will be known about the Grooming Committee.

KONGBERGERS IN ACTION ...

I sent out a group email asking people to tell me about their summer adventures, and I got back some great stories. Thanks, everyone who responded; it's been fun living vicariously through all of you! Several people sent me pictures, which didn't come out so spectacularly in your photocopied version of the newsletter, but which can be seen in all their technicolor glory in the KSC website version of the newsletter.

Eustis/Wolber Report: Jeff's story: "At 10 am on Sunday morning, July 1st, Jeff and Ross Eustis summited Mt. Rainier in 60 mph winds with Terri and Fin (the Eustises' guest from Bhutan) close behind. Apparently, other mountaineers had better sense to climb in those conditions since they had the summit to themselves. To their knowledge, it was the first Bhutanese ascent of the mountain."



Karas Report: Paul and Val decided to ski from Paradise to Camp Muir on the Fourth of July, on randonee skis. As Val reports, "It was very hard work! The snow was slow and sun was hot; we spent almost ten hours on the route. But we made it to the camp."



Baker Report. Sam's story: "Martha and I just got back from an overnight backpack in Grand Valley in the Olympics. Beautiful! No one else in the whole valley except one who was camped a mile away. The road to Obstruction Point is only open halfway out (snow) so most people don't want to hike four miles on the road to get to the trailhead. Saw one black bear. Went for an early am paddle with some friends today in twenty-knot wind from Freshwater Bay to Crescent Beach.... nice. Did a solo paddling trip in the Broken Islands and Deer Group (Barkely Sound West Coast of Vancouver Island) for a week about a month ago. Great time! Just what I needed after five weeks of orthopedics in Bhutan this spring. Heading to Alaska at the end of the month for some paddling. Martha is going to Yosemite with four girlfriends, one of whom won the lottery to go into a very beautiful area. Martha and I are doing a paddling trip in early September with Chris and Lisa off Vancouver Island. And of course, hiking and stuff with the kids. Whew!"

Newton Report. Dave and Shirley Newton headed to Tennessee in June, where Dave competed in swimming in the Senior Olympics. He hasn't shared the details with me yet, but I'm sure he has some great fish stories!

Greig/Bransfield Report. Angie and Neil are spending the summer back east at the you-pick blueberry farm, living the pastoral life and getting in lots of fresh air and manual labor.



Rosvall Report. Speaking of peaceful summer scenery, Martin spent two weeks at his parents' cabin on Gotland in Sweden and sent back these idyllic pictures.



Slyfield Report. Jim's report on summer biathlon: "Max Limb, Robin Pederson, and Jim Slyfield competed in the Washington Biathlon Association's Summer Biathlon race at the Seattle Police Athletic Association rifle range near Boeing Field. The men's race was a 6Km, women ran 5Km. Everyone took 20 shots with the rifle. Max showed the young bucks how to run and shoot! Jim shot well prone, but realized that sitting in a car for two weeks driving across the country is not the best way to train for a running race. Robin shot better than usual and played hard-to-catch on the run.

"Next WBA race is Saturday, August 18, 2007. The format is "Super Sprint". Short running distances—only 500m or so per lap—then you take five shots at five targets; if there are any targets that you missed, you get three more shots to knock them down. Use of a Biathlon rifle and ammo is included in the novice racer's entry fee. The last summer race is in Yakima on Saturday, October 6. It is an "individual" format: 7.5Km run on a scenic and hilly course. No P-Laps, just 30 seconds added to your time per miss. Here's the dirty secret regarding biathlon—at the local level, it's a runner's (or skier's) race! Hitting anything is a cause for celebration, but your time on the course far outweighs your time on the range—just try to stay out of the Penalty Loop..."

GREY ROCK 50K TRAIL RUN...

Dubbed the hardest little ultra in Washington, the Grey Rock 50K lived up to its reputation again this year. In addition to the 6,000 feet of elevation gain and the temperatures in the mid-80's, the race director warned of "explosive" fire danger and the threat of lightning storms setting off brush fires. Nevertheless, Jeff Hashimoto won for the second year in a row (in 4:47) and beat his last year's course record by 20 minutes. He ran a thoughtfully paced race, listening to the dictates of his heart rate monitor, and left his closest competition an hour and a half behind, whimpering by the side of the trail, after running neck and neck for the first part of the race. One racer commented that Jeff must never need new shoes, because his feet don't ever seem to touch the ground! After his race, ever the gracious winner, Jeff hung around the finish line until the very last runner had finished, handing out cold drinks and cold wet washcloths (which are my definition of heaven!) to the hot and dusty competitors. Carey also finished very strong in 7:27, as the second woman overall and the first in her age group, even after dealing with a bad cold all week. Your humble editor made it about 20 miles this year, before succumbing to the heat and the time cutoff and accepting a wild, four-wheelin', off-road ride back to the finish from a cute firefighter on an ATV! Carey and I each ran out of water at some point in the race and had to resort to drinking from streams, so we may be incubating interesting flora in our guts.

This is a very fun, very beautiful trail run in the Cowiche Mountains west of Yakima, offering both 25K and 50K options, a fabulous post-race lunch, and a great technical fabric t-shirt. It's an excellent close-to-home alternative for anyone who is tired of the dense, moist forests on the west side of the Cascades!

MINI-ORDEAL HIKE, THE PREVIEW...



Loyal scouts Ozzie, Joan, Erik, Paul, Kare (that's Kare in the picture above), Aase, and your humble editor hiked from Windy Pass toward Mirror Lake to check out the snow conditions a week prior to the traditional July 4th Mini-Ordeal Hike. We found tons and tons and tons of snow! This made the trail almost impossible to find (Joan's GPS track looks like a drunken sailor!) and some of the steep slopes very difficult to cross. In fact, one of our party fell off one of the snowy slopes and slid down to the bottom before tumbling into the rocks and bushes. Kare chivalrously jumped off the trail and glissaded down to the tumbler, planning to pick up the broken pieces, but no harm was done (except for some bruises and scratches and perhaps to the tumbler's ego). Trip leader Joan prudently decided that these were not optimal conditions for a hike, so this hike was postponed until the snow melts and Joan came up with another fun option for the holiday (see below). Koll and Vidar are still interested in doing the original Mini-Ordeal, so they will set something up for maybe September. Stay tuned!

MINI-ORDEAL HIKE, THE ALTERNATIVE...

The brand new 11-mile Snoqualmie Point to Rattlesnake Lake trail looked like a nice, snow-free way to celebrate the Fourth of July, so early on a hot sunny morning, several of us gathered in the Rattlesnake Lake parking lot: Joan and Ozzie, Kare and Aase and their friend Sunny, Keith, Glen, Koll, Vidar, and your humble editor. We shuttled some cars to the Snoqualmie Point parking lot and took off from there. We quickly (and unintentionally, I'm sure) split into three groups: boys, girls, and the Kare/Aase/Sunny team bringing up the rear. At some point the boy group left the trail for a scenic lunch and the girl group pulled ahead, stopping to play with every dog we met. At one of the three scenic overlooks we met the Kaald family, heading up from Rattlesnake Lake. Eventually all the groups were reunited and we headed down to the lake for splashing and swimming and lunch. We also found Anna Louise, who had opted for a mountain bike ride on the Iron Horse trail instead. After lunch I headed down the trail for a little mountain bike ride myself; Rattlesnake Lake is the western terminus of the Iron Horse trail and it's a beautiful, nontechnical ride, with sun-dappled forests, bubbling streams, wildflowers, and mountain views. It was a great way to celebrate a mid-week holiday, with lots of exercise, fresh air and sunshine, and great company to share it with!

TRAIL WORK THANKS...

David Evans, Kyle Nagle and a posse of ski team kids from Seattle Country Day School, a total of 14 bodies, put in 250 hours of hard physical labor this month, building muscles and trails on Amabilis. This work is very much appreciated, and the kids have gained a new and valuable sense of the true cost of skiing on our great trails. Thanks, everyone—you guys rock!

UP-MOUNTAIN RACING IN NORWAY, BY PER JOHNSEN...

While we were in Norway in June I had a chance to participate in one of the "Opp-" races that are now the rage over there. Any community with any self respect and a local mountain seems to be hosting a race to the summit. The magazine *Kondis* listed the best 100 races of this kind for the summer. Some are short sprints, 100 meters vertical gain, but others are monstrous. The toughest is Sula Opp, in Stryn on the west coast. The race is 8k long but goes from sea level to over 1800 meters. That is about 6000 vertical feet. The winners complete it in just over an hour. The field in these races consists of uphill running specialists, Nordic ski racers, orienteering champs, and lots of others with ambition and a tolerance for hurt. They have organized both national and European championships. The training magazines have articles about the best way to train and compete in up-mountain races. I looked at several DVDs of races from the last couple of years and found that the best performers tend to be very slim and they seem to have adopted a very quick, short-step technique.

A few days after arriving in Oslo, I found out about a local race, Tryvann Opp. The magazine *Kondis* and a local group in Oslo, which has organized weekly time trials around the Lake Sognsvann, sponsored it. Tryvann Opp follows a route from the lower slopes of the small mountain behind Oslo, below the Holmenkollen Ski Jump and finishes at the base of the large TV tower at the top. The vertical gain is about 1000 feet and the distance is 5.4k. I thought this would be fun to try, so I signed up. There were about 350 participants and there would be two waves, with Wave 1 comprised of all women and men 50 and over, and men under 50 in Wave 2 would start 20 minutes later. The weather was hot, about 88 degrees and high humidity.

I started and was astonished to see how fast the runners were going. I am a slow starter so I didn't panic, but I'm not used to being near the end of a field of runners. I really had to work to keep up. The heat was oppressive and many of the climbs were steep. The course had a couple of short flat sections, but mostly it consisted of relentless uphill. I worked hard to get toward the middle of the pack, passing about 50 people once we got near the top. I felt that I was pushing as hard as I could, and I found my place in the pack where the passing ends. I finished and picked up my completion medal. I felt that I could not have gone much harder. My time was a little over 33 minutes. During the awards ceremony I saw that the top four, all from Kenya, finished under 20 minutes, and the top woman was in about 25 minutes. Very impressive. When I checked the results later I found out that I was 4th in the 60-64 age group, out of 8. The winner had 30 minutes.

What I found most impressive was the incredibly high quality of runners. There were kids of 12 or 13 who finished several minutes ahead of me, and scores of runners 8 or 10 minutes faster. I had thought that I was a fairly strong uphill runner, but this experience was sobering. The performance level in Norwegian races is very high, and there are loads of impressive runners. Also, it is fun to be in races where well-known racers also participate. The Olympic champion ski racer Tore Ruud-Hofstad was about 6th overall.

My experience in Tryvann Opp inspired me to see if we could do similar races here. "Up Amabilis" to the top would be a perfect candidate. I realize that there is a history of up-races like Mt. Si, but I think there is a new generation of runners who would be willing to try other up-mountain races, and there are plenty of former runners, like me, who can no longer compete on the roads for injury reasons. Racing uphill is still possible for anyone who wants to give it a try, allowing many of us to enjoy racing without the pounding. The exhilaration is still the same and the pride in completing something really demanding feels good. What do you think?

LATE-BREAKING NEWS ...

A big "WOW!" to Jeff Hashimoto for finishing eighth overall in 7:40 in the White River 50-Mile USATF Trail Run Championships in late June!

SOMEONE ELSE SAID ...

"To me, it doesn't matter how athletic you are or how raw you are, if it isn't bringing you joy, a different approach is needed. Our bodies are after all the only thing separating us from the Otherside. Let us love them while we have them!"

Tonya Kay, Professional Dancer