

1952 High Trip

(The 47th High Trip)

First Period – Onion Valley to Sawmill Pass - July 13 to 26

Second Period – Cartridge Pass to South Lake – July 27 to August 9

Third Period – Mather Pass to Sawmill Pass – August 10 to 23

The scenic climax of the Sierra crest is in store for those who are in on the beginning of the second half century of the High Trip. And we have promise, in the current snowy winter, that the Muir Trail sky-land we are to visit will be even more beautifully alpine than usual.

As always, we have tried to plan the High Trip so that you will move often enough to see new vistas and horizons but never so often, so far, or so rapidly that you can't linger to appreciate them.

The High Trips

What We'll See (1st Period)

Starting at Onion Valley, high above Independence, we take the easiest pass into the mountains in this part of the Sierra – Kearsarge Pass – and drop down past Bullfrog Lake to Charlotte Lake campsite. From this familiar ground we move to a camp in Gardiner Basin, which no Sierra Club trip has visited yet, but which has been very highly spoken of by those who have seen it, including Walter Starr, Jr. On the next move, the stock crosses Glen pass to Sixty Lakes Basin. There is a cross-country substitute (passable to burros) for those who like to leave the trail now and then. Sixty Lakes Basin is less famous than Rae Lakes only because it is off the main Muir Trail. The next move takes us up to a camp at Twin lakes or at Woods Lake (depending upon the situation and the terrain) – either of them a beauty, but the former better known to Sierra Club high trippers for one of the most beautiful campfire sites of all. Here the lucky few who are continuing for more than two weeks stay put (not literally, of course) while the first-two-weekers leave the mountains by way of Sawmill Pass and a spectacular drop to Owens Valley.

What We'll See (2nd Period)

Sawmill Pass is not an easy way into the mountains, so we take two days to cross it, with one of those early starts that people groan about before dawn but are relishing within the first half hour. The first camp is high and cool, on the east side of Sawmill Pass, which we then cross on a move to Twin Lakes – just as rewarding for the second-two-weekers as for the first, whom we join there. The entire party now crosses Pinchot Pass. The next camp – Bench Lake – is one we'd waste words on by describing. Ask anyone! We pity the mules but not ourselves as we cross Cartridge pass to Marion Lake, less well known than Bench but no less beautiful. Then down to the Middle Fork of the Kings and up its magnificent canyon, rich in river scenes no high tripper has seen since his youth, to Grouse Meadow camp, close under the Devil's Crags. Finally, up LeConte Canyon into well known country again – Dusy Basin and the high open spaces under Mount Agassiz, Mount Winchell and North Palisade. Here the second-two-weekers depart over Bishop Pass to South Lake.



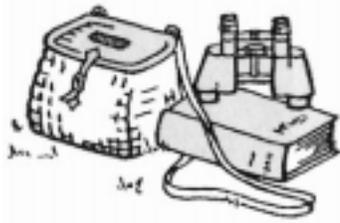
What We'll See (3rd Period)

Reversing last year's last steps, we travel to Bishop Pas from South Lake and join the holdover party in Dusy Basin. We then reverse the second 1952 period but change passes, substituting Mather Pass, on the Muir Trail, for Cartridge Pass. Consequently, the move from Grouse Meadow takes us to Palisade Lakes, close under Middle Palisade, instead of to Marion Lake. The mules will have an easier time of it on more familiar ground as they travel sideways but hardly ever down on the south side of Mather pass. The bench Lake and Twin Lakes camps will be the same as the second two weeks, and the final move will take us in one day up and all the way down Sawmill Pass to one of those most familiar of Owens Valley sights – freshly bathed but still bronzed high trippers in Bishop.

Alternative

As all old-time High Trippers know, the itinerary published at this time of the year is not so much prediction as it is an educated guess. The chief assumption in the itinerary above is that we will be able to get over Glen Pass shortly after mid-July. If at that time we find that this winter's heavy snows have produced a small new glacier at Glen pass that will prohibit the passing of stock until two weeks has been spent in shoveling or melting, then the present plan is to spend the first two weeks up and down Bubbs Creek, with camps at Charlotte Lake, Gardiner Basin, Center basin, and Lake Reflection. The second two weeks would then be the same as the first two as originally planned, and the third two weeks would go in the opposite direction – Sawmill Pass to Bishop Pass by way of Mather Pass. We have a secret wish that the snow on Glen Pass be too deep for mid-July crossing, if only because of our recollection of the camp we have in mind near Reflection Lake. It is on a bench just above the lake on the way to Harrison Pass; the Club has never camped there before. We rank it with Upper Milestone Bench and Darwin Bench as the finest in our Sierra experience.

What The Trip Is Like



High Trips follow an approved formula for high mountain pleasure. Mules, duly persuaded by the packers, carry the load – the food, dunnage, and commissary equipment. Skilled hands organize the camp and prepare the mountain meals. Trip members carrying their minimum noontime needs choose their own pace, companions, and route to the next campsite. We move a day, rest a day or two, move again, and so on, through a matchless wilderness.

People who haven't been on a High Trip are usually dubious about their chances of enjoying a large party. People who have been on High Trips find that watching a fair cross-section of the populace, from children not yet in their teens on up to old hands in their seventies, and seeing their pleasure, is an important part of the fun of the trip. The mountains are big; there's solitude galore for those who seek it. Those who want it all the time will not enjoy a High Trip.

There's always plenty to do on a High Trip- natural sciences to study in their habitat; mountaineering, rock-climbing, and map-reading instruction, fishing, photographing, campfire entertainment, the moving-day circuses wherever the mules and packers are, the thrill of moving to new places every day or so ... and there'll be plenty *not* to do those who want a quiet place in the half-shade.

Commissary

The commissary crew will be nearly the same as last year's: the trip will be led by Dave Brower and Pat Goldsworthy; Jim Harkins and Paul Kaufmann will have the cooking in hand; Bob Golden, Charlotte Mauk, and Al Carpenter will be the principal logisticians; other old hands and new will round out the crew – and once again we expect to have medical students all over the place. The Mt. Whitney pack Trains mule strings will be under the able management of Bruce Morgan, assisted, we hope by all last year's packers.

The commissary crew on a High Trip has to be large – it takes manpower to make and break camp – but it is never large enough. As long as there's a High Trip there'll be ample opportunity for volunteer wielders of ax, shovel and hotcake or trout turner.



The Cost

The total cost will be \$78 for a two-week period, \$60 for children under fourteen (but check with the management to see how far under they can be and still be likely to get along. Last year Kenny Brower, at six and a half years, had enough fun to want to go again immediately – and his parents felt the same way about it). In setting this fee we have corrected our last year's over-optimism, which led us to try a deposit \$68 (children \$50), and left the trip handsomely in the red, even after a \$5 assessment per person. Packing, food, and club overhead have since all gone up a little; hence this year's increase. We hope the figure doesn't seem too high to you. It is so much higher than we had hoped it would be that it has occurred to us in our facetious moments that we should try to imitate the television salesmen: not mention the total price at all, but merely say the \$4 a week between now and trip time will swing it. Our motto might be, "For less than you spend on gasoline, you can walk."

Saddle Horse Trips

The 1952 Saddle Trip, a ten-day circle ride, will start June 29 and end July 8 at Carroll Creek Pack Station, near Lone Pine. The itinerary will cover some of the outstanding scenery of the southern Sierra, including the highest point in the United States, the finest unspoiled wilderness canyon remaining in the Sierra, the native habitat of the renowned Golden Trout, and a succession of memorable meadows, forests, lakes, streams, waterfalls, and mountain flower gardens.

What the Trip is Like

The Saddle trip, first taken in 1939, is similar in every way to the well known "Trail Rider" trips sponsored by the American Forestry Association. In fact, the stock, packers, commissary, and equipment are identical; on the sponsorship is different.

The trip is comparable to the "cavalry" that used to accompany the High Trip in years gone by, but presently offers attractions not found on any of the other club trips, as follows: (1) There is a higher percentage of traveling time on the trip, hence riders are able to see more country. (2) The trip is smaller in size (limited to 20). (3) Riding is obviously easier on the corporosity. (4) The unsurpassed Sierra scenery can be assimilated

better from a saddle. (5) Riders are permitted 50 pounds of dunnage. (6) The grub list is second to none. (7) The privilege of riding horses and getting to know mules is one that grows more rare as we grow more mechanical.

Itinerary

The itinerary will include Mulkey Pass; Little Whitney Meadows; Golden Trout Creek; Lower Funston Meadow, finest camping spot in Kern Canyon; Junction Meadows; the High Sierra Trail up Wallace Creek; Crabtree camp, under the shadow of the Whitney Range; a side trip (perhaps part way on foot if the top is too snowy) to the summit of Mount Whitney, with its justly famous and breathtaking view; Guyot Pass to Rock Creek; Army Pass, Cottonwood Lakes; and down Little Cottonwood Creek to road's end at Carroll Creek.



This year's trip will be led by William V. Dorris, long an active leader in the Southern California Chapter. Bill was co-leader of the Monument valley trip. He has organized and led pack trips and is familiar with wilderness camping in the Sierra and in the Canadian Rockies. He will be ably assisted by Bruce Morgan, owner-manager of Mt. Whitney pack Trains, who will be in charge of packing and commissary.

Ike Livermore

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