

Robinson Mt (8726')

May 9, 2010

Sun. eve freeze, firm morning snow low, mush afternoon

Carla Schauble (dicey), Bill Bergholdt (mudslinger)

These snow ascents some reminding more of winter add a spice to the reports I read of doing these summits in the summer. The snow makes getting past brush easier. Up some cl 3 a steep walk and some cl 3 treacherous and exposed. Weather also has it's affects. Cool for nice ascents, and sometimes blustery of a spring blizzard. Blizzards in May? Yes, and nice weather too. With a mix of good and a bit spicy a twist to each route.

Forecast for thunderstorms and possible wet in the NC including east of the crest. So often been told, if wet go east. Well, it was a nice spring day in the Seattle area. Why head east? Past weeks had dumped feet of snow in the west of crest mountains and predicted avy forecasts and warnings were being taken seriously. If big dumps, east of the crest was only inches. A good size group did Silver Winters Peak (<http://www.nwhikers.net/forums/viewtopic.php?t=7983043>). Bill and I had one day free and picked the best forecast day (Sunday). I'd told Dicey we'd pick her up at 6:30 at the Mazama Store. Passing the Silver Star TH only one car of skiers and no sign (visible) of the Silver Winter Peak group. Onward and pulling up to the Mazama store a familiar bright green jacket on the porch working on a 6 pack. Dinner time so we loaded and headed into Winthrop for great pizza and brew at East 20.

Stuffed with pizza we headed to meet with Paul C. (campfire waiting) at Ballard CG. On the way we caught Tazz driving the opposite direction and got her to turn around.

Some campfire time and turning in early for a 6 Th start.

Eves had brought a barely freezing temperature. Good news hoping for firm snow and easy walking. Leaving the Robinson TH at 6:10 the trail was mellow slowly ascending set for horses. At 1.2m, c3200', 440ascent a dilapidating bridge. A little more pitch up and at 2.7m, c3640, 1hr A new bridge being built over Beauty creek. About 40 feet and p a small obvious trail (right). Very steeply up with a few switchbacks (much desired). Great view of the waterfall and at c4200 the trail mellowed and we hit first snow on the trail at c4400. The surface was very firm so we donned crampons. Finding trail here and there then losing it at c5000'. Around a high up buttress at about 4 miles heading up, an occasional hole to drop into. Cross creek at 4.1m 5800' and up sparse open pitch (stream on left). Pitch mellows again at 62-6300 with small sparse pine and larch. At c6780', 4.7m, 3hr40min (3920ascent) we arrived at the open basin with small tarn. The sun was welcome and very bright on the snow. I could just imagine how hot that stretch could be midday I the summer.

A food break and assessed a route up. The direct route NW looked to have potential avy issues and the up would take some time leaving us exposed. We headed SEE to the left up the shortest route to the ridge. Following was easy, then my turn to put steps in. OMG, the snow was heavy piled on the shoes and it was work. We traded off and in 40 minutes arrived at the ridge (7265', 4.9m). We followed the ridge NNE up several very steep pitches then side hilling. At 7920 a good slope to glissade directly back to the tarn. To assure success I allowed my trekking pole to glissade what appeared all the way down the hill. Oh, well... We dodged avy potential slopes, giant cornices, Mudslinger almost being swallowed by a hole. Within a foot of the edge of the cornice were deer or goat track. Amazing how close on the edge.

I was getting slower and looking at my altimeter realized altitude could be factor. We'd ascended over 5800' to c8500'. Going was good... too good. Some thin snow over rock and there we stood looking

down at the crux of the trip. From a far we'd seen some potential ups. Once looking across they were out. Just getting to the saddle looked very dicey. Then what? There was a thin ridge covered partially with snow. Or dropping into an avy bowl north. Still how to get to the saddle? We pondered ideas and were thinking this could be it due to the snow conditions. Major bummer! We hung out and kept checking out possibilities. The sun popped out for a brief moment, enough to see the slope to the right was good to get to the saddle. Walking up toward the ridge like a go. Very exposed and not sure what was under the snow. Bill set a belay and in a short bit I had a bomber anchor up top and belayed the rest up. Whew! Funny there were paw prints up here following the ridge to the summit. Compared to the steep uphill, a cake walk (with rests) and we were at the summit (1:36p, 6.2m, 6043' ascent, 7hr15min).

Sunshine, calm and totally breathtaking views. More food, rounds of name that summit... Interesting the peaks from this angle. I probed and the snow was only a foot deep. A little shoveling, a pile of rocks and a Fay Pullen register from Sept 2002 (21 pages, last entry was Andy D Nov 3, 09.).

After an hour relaxing on the summit we headed back. Belayed the thin ridge crest and walked back the ridge with snowshoes. At the c7920' saddle an over 800' glissade. Postholing so snowshoes again to the tarn. It took 3h30min to get from tarn to summit and 2h back. We were on a relaxing schedule so took our time before leaving the gorgeous tarn basin. The snow was mushy and postholed even with snowshoes. Then slippery... back to boots, better to posthole than the flying down the hill. A few more glissades and tromping across the hill we came upon a pile of fur with crushed bones and some discolored reddish pink snow. Wondering if it was caught in a slide or what... A bit of pondering and off traversing the hill. About a hundred foot or so above Beauty Creek we found the trail. Soon no snow and down the steeper hill. A stop to check out the waterfall, then checking out the new bridge being built over Beauty Creek. 50 minutes and we were at the TH. Chips, salsa a cold refreshment... and off with the boots. The day went by quick, great views, a great partners made this a rewarding trip.

Thanks guys!

Happy trails,
fwb2

Stats:

7h15up, 4:20down, 12h30 total (with breaks)

6.2m up, 6m down, 12.2m total

A little over 6130 ascent

Gear: Crampons, ice axe, avy gear (probe, shovel, transceiver), trek pole (gone), harness, 30m rope (50m would have been better), 4 double slings, sunblock...