

signpost

the magazine for Northwest trails

SINCE 1965

NOVEMBER 1987

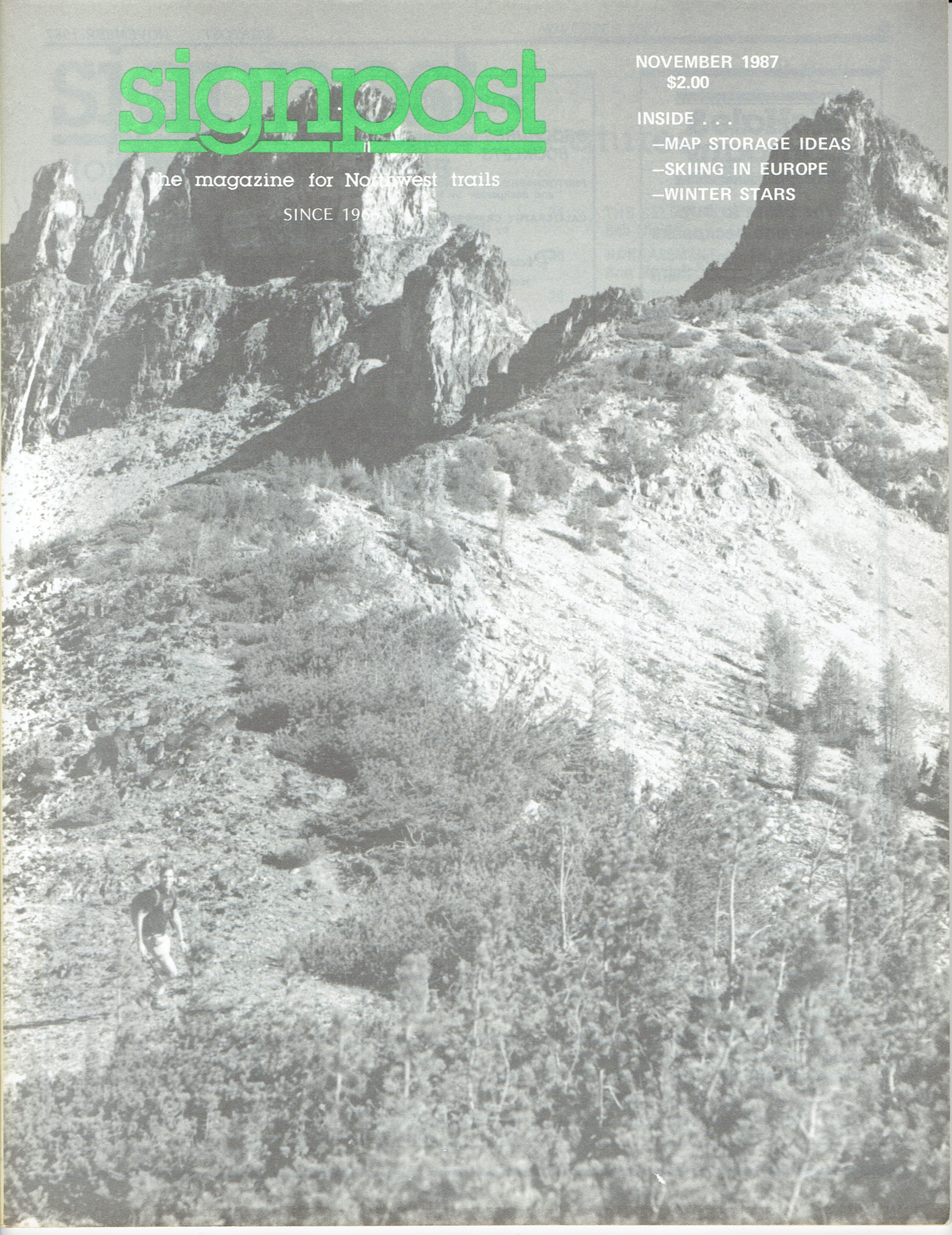
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INSIDE . . .

—MAP STORAGE IDEAS

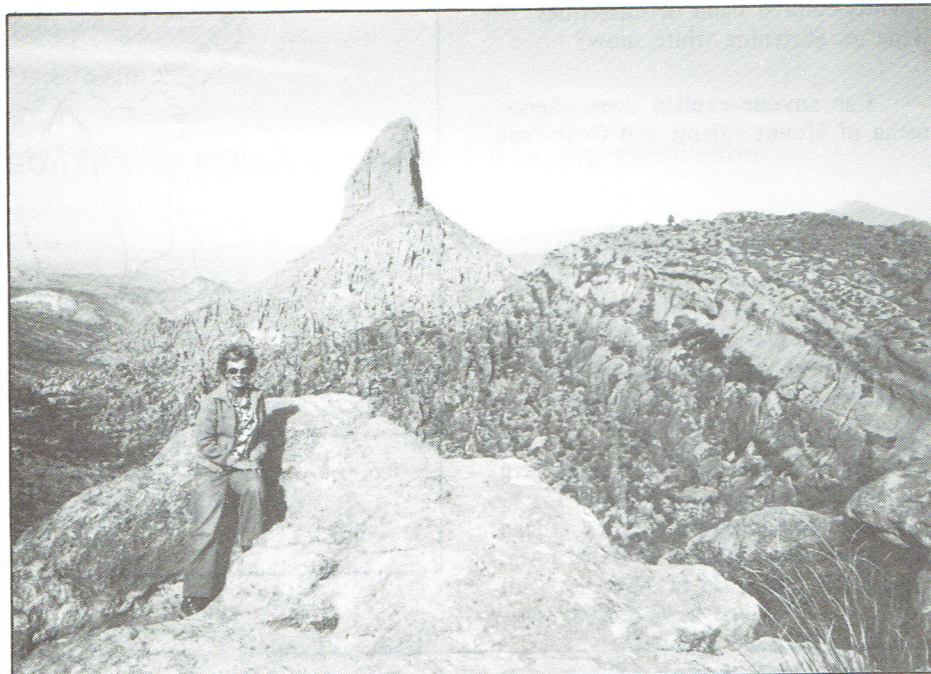
—SKIING IN EUROPE

—WINTER STARS



NORTHWEST EXPLORER

ADVENTURES AND SUGGESTIONS
ON PLACES TO GO



Shirley Lindahl

Weaver's Needle from Fremont Saddle.

leather boots.

Volcanic activity formed the Superstitions, and wind and water erosion have shaped them into canyons, caves, spires, hoodoos, and balanced rocks. It is a fascinating area to explore. Many hikes in Washington include a view of "The Mountain." In

the Superstitions it is "The Needle" that highlights many viewpoints. Weaver's Needle is a 4535-foot high volcanic plug standing as a solitary remnant of the past.

The sight of a waterfall in this region is rare, so they are savored. Often we use dry waterfalls as a

scramble route. Wildflowers appear in late February as pockets of color in the canyons, and by March whole hillsides begin to bloom and the desert floor comes to life again.

My hiking companions include avid hikers from areas like Alberta and Colorado, as well as first-timers from the flatlands of the Mid-west. Retirement means time to pursue new interests or continue a favorite activity while learning about a new part of the country. We've found there is beauty in the desert and the mountains that surround it.

The geology and history of the Superstition Mountains add to the interest many people have in this region. The rugged terrain has never revealed the site of the Lost Dutchman's Mine.

If your winter travels find you near Mesa or Apache Junction, Arizona, stop and take a hike in the Superstitions.

Shirley Lindahl, of Kirkland, has hiked with the Women's Hiking Club sponsored by the Renton Park Department for the past ten years.

DEVORE PEAK—Glacier Peak Wilderness, Washington

Steve Fry

Attracted by seldom-visited summits, groves of larch trees, and promising panoramas, Steve Ricker, David Singleton and I ventured into

the realm of Devore Peak from September 19 through 23.

Devore Peak, estimated elevation 8380 feet, is Washington's 48th highest "major" mountain and is located just 5.5 air miles southwest of Stehekin in the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

Probably the easiest route to Devore is by way of Lake Chelan,

Stehekin and Weaver Point Campground, followed by a stiff 7-mile, 7500-foot elevation gain hike/climb up Devore Creek and Devore's steep, scree-ridden southeast slopes to the airy summit.

We, however, chose the Ironman Route (also dubbed the Poor Man's Option). This route involved: (1) marching over Cascade Pass to Cotton-

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wood (9.2 miles, 2000 feet elevation gain); (2) riding the 10:30am Stehekin Shuttle Bus to Company Creek trail-head (18 miles, \$4/person one way); (3) hiking 8 miles and about 3500 feet elevation gain, including ups and downs, up the Company Creek/Hilgard Creek Trail to the small stream which intersects the trail at 4300 feet; (4) leaving the trail at 4300 feet and plodding up the steep, tree-dotted rib which parallels the north side of the unnamed stream (we followed the rib to 6400 feet, where flat meadows and nearby water coaxed the packs right off our backs—higher, panoramic, larch-ringed meadows at 6800 feet and 7000 feet also bore water, but we couldn't persuade ourselves to lug our gear any higher); and (5) establishing a new climbing route by ascending Devore by its north ridge.

Of course we didn't reach Devore's crown the same day we began our

outing. The first night we camped alongside Company Creek—5 miles up the Company Creek Trail, at the spot where the trail crosses the creek. Our early departure from Seattle (2:30am), heavy packs, heat and the hard workout had us dragging into camp at 6:30pm.

The next morning we ignored the early wake-up call of Steve's watch, and weren't on the trail again until 8:30am. We should have left earlier. After crossing Company Creek on a large fallen tree, we hiked up the trail to the 4300-foot stream.

Here we crept up the steep, grueling slope in the sweltering heat. Luckily, huckleberries gave us much-needed energy boosts to help us overcome the slope.

We arrived at our 6400-foot camp in mid-afternoon. Then Steve and I hurriedly threw together our climbing

gear and set about making the fifth recorded ascent of 7820-foot White Goat Mountain before darkness fell.

The easiest route up White Goat is Class 5—so a rope and rock hardware are a necessity. Steve led us up the southeast buttress, which, as indicated by two pitons we saw, as well as my review of the original Mazama account, is the route taken by the first ascent party.

The technical portion of the climb is only one pitch—low Class 5, and than a short Class 2 or 3 scramble along the knife-edged summit finishes the climb. The original Mazama summit register (September 1940) is still in fair condition, and is quite a relic.

On Monday, September 21, our trio climbed Devore Peak by its north ridge. Most of the climb is Class 1 or 2, but the final portion of the ridge is Class 4. Initially we scamper-



Devore Peak's steep northeast face, with north ridge on right skyline.

Steve Fry

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ed to the summit of each gendarme or point along the north ridge—to build rock cairns to show signs of visitation.

Eventually David and I tired of clambering to the top of every point, so Steve carried on the business of conquering each little tower.

Gullies and ledges on the west side of the north ridge provide safe passage around steep ribs and also act as byways back up to the main ridge. In fact, a final hidden gully—between the highest northern gendarme and the main summit—provides access to the summit ridge, where two 15-foot sections of Class 4 rock took us to the summit.

From Devore's apex we garnered great vistas of the North Cascades, with Fernow, Bonanza, Dome, Baker, Eldorado, Buckner and Goode dominating the western skyline, while Silver Star, North Gardner, Reynolds, Oval and Cardinal presided over the eastern horizon.

The Mazama's bomb-proof brass cannister very adequately preserved the original summit register. The first recorded ascent of Devore, according to the register, was by Abigail Avery,

Stuart Avery, Jane Foster McConnell, Grant McConnell, Paul Park, Ida Darr and Everett Darr on July 28, 1940, during a Mazama climbing outing.

Also noteworthy is the gap in time between the fourth (August 6, 1941) and the fifth (August 19, 1974) recorded ascents—33 years! Our ascent is the 16th recorded on Devore. By contrast, Rainier, Adams, Baker and Saint Helens see more ascents in one day than Devore has seen in its lifetime.

The largest percentage of visitations to Devore's summit have been made by a group known as the Bulgers. This group has specialized in climbing the highest mountains in Washington. Seven members—Russ Kroeker, Bruce Gibbs, Bob Tillotson, Betty Felton, John Roper, John Lixvar and Silas Wild—have succeeded in climbing all of their "Top 100" mountains.

Following one rappel from the summit and a bit of belayed down-climbing, we descended the south slopes of Devore's east ridge. Scree fields abound, but this terrain is better than descending Devore's pinnacled upper east ridge. Later we gained the east ridge and eventually found a route

that safely led us down the east ridge's northern side (avoiding cliffs) to Devore's eastern, glacial lakes.

These moraine-dammed lakes looked unappetizing to drink, with the water being either mud-puddle-brown or pea-soup-green in color. The easternmost lake is larch-rimmed, however, and looks like it offers pleasant camping.

Expect rotten rock on much of Devore Peak, especially on its southern portion. Bring a hard hat, rope, and some climbing hardware. The trail up Company and Hilgard Creeks has horse traffic so it can be very dusty on steep grades, and in the vicinity of western feeder streams the path was a boggy, muddy mess. The trail is also without dependable water for the first 3 miles.

MAPS: USGS Mount Lyall, Stehekin, Cascade Pass, Goode Mountain
TRAILHEAD: From Highway 20 at Marblemount, drive east to the Cascade Pass trailhead at road-end.

MARTIN CREEK TRAIL—Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Washington

David Sherman

The Skykomish River Valley, due to its proximity to Seattle and its rugged yet accessible mountains, provides some of the most popular day-day-hiking in the state. Lake Dorothy, Lake Serene, Trout Lake, Surprise Lake, and Blanca Lake all draw large crowds on summer weekends. The parking areas are packed, the trails eroded, and the campsites well-worn.

I am always glad to see lots of people on those trails, because I consider them all to be prospective wilderness preservation lobbyists—but I am usually on my way somewhere else.

One of those "somewhere else" is Martin Creek. Like the popular trails, it is close to Highway 2, follows a beautiful stream through ancient forests, and arrives in a few miles at a lovely scenic spot from which the more energetic hiker can wander in several directions.

Unlike those well-known routes, however, the Martin Creek Trail is virtually unused. It is not mentioned

in the hiking books, or shown on modern maps. The trail climbs through old growth forest from Martin Creek to Johnson Ridge near Captain Point. From there you can easily climb to the top of Captain Point or walk north to Joan Lake, Scorpion Mountain, and a junction with the still-maintained portion of the Johnson Ridge Trail that comes up from the west.

Last year I wrote a report to Signpost on this trail (*see December 1986, page 27*). At that time it was definitely a bushwhack and an exercise in finding old blazes (no thanks to the person who strung red ribbons all