

Alpine Scrambling Trip Report

Everett Mountaineers

Destination: Malachite Peak	Date of Trip: 9/13/2003
Map(s): GT Skykomish	Scramble Rating: R 5-5
Guidebook: 100 Hikes in Alpine Lakes (Copper Lake)	Summit Height: 6261
Trailhead: 1500	Elevation Gained: 4700
Miles Round Trip: 12	

Leader: **Tony Tsuboi**

Driving Instructions: **Hwy 2 to Skykomish, Foss River Road to Trout Lake Trailhead**

Ascent Route: **Follow trail to Copper Lake. Look for sharp RIGHT spur to Malechite Lake just before Copper Lake. Ascend ridge on the other side of the Malechite Lake log jam. Follow the crest of the ridge to roughly 5200. Malechite Peak should be roughly due north. Descend to saddle and follow up the ridge to the base of the rock peak. Corkscrew up clockwise till you find a gully. Where a sheer wall appears to the right, turn 90 degrees and follow the base of the wall through thick brush. Follow path of least resistance up class 3 terrain to false summit. Traverse ridge westward on the north side to the true summit.**

Descent Route: **Reverse of the above**

Weather conditions: **Clear, cool and beautiful!**

Trip Summary	From	To	Elapsed Times
	Carpool:6:00 am	Trailhead:7:00 am	hours
	Trail head: 7:30 am	Summit: 1:15 pm	hours
	Summit: 2:00 pm	Trailhead:7:00 pm	hours

Overall Pace of Party: Leisurely Moderate Intense
 Steepness Can't Fall Could Fall Don't Fall
 Terrain Encountered: Rock Snow/ice Brush Other: Class 3 / 4 terrain
 Equipment Recommended: Hardhat Crampons Rope Snowshoes
 Was a handline used: **Yes** (If yes, describe circumstances): **Assisted down climb of a tricky section.**
 Accident Involved: **No** (If yes, submit an accident report):

Trip Comments: Malachite Peak is a very strenuous and technically demanding peak to climb. It's also one of the most rewarding to bag. Only a well-seasoned and well-equipped group should attempt this peak. All should be comfortable with BIG exposure. My recommendation is to keep the party size small.

I have an incredible amount of respect for Gary's stamina, and when he declares that this is the toughest peak he's scrambled, that's saying a lot. The trail to the lakes alone is quite steep and demanding. There is route finding over seldom traveled terrain with few if any indicators of the correct path. If visibility is clear, this should be straight forward and no problem. The off trail journey from the lakes weaves through very cliffy terrain, and route finding on the descent could be aided with the use of surveyors tape on the way up. We did get a bit off route on our descent and I cursed myself for not marking the path at a few key points.

Beware, there is a lot of exposure on this route, and you'll certainly utilize all four limbs. Do bring poles and plan to re-water along the way. Mountaineering boots are recommended. Paul wore lightweight hiking boots with worn tread and had difficulty making it up and down the steep heather slopes of the

saddle. From the saddle up the ridge to the base of the peak is thick brush (BW4) on very steep ground with cliffs along the way.

We did bring a handline. We could have gotten away without it, but Gary was itching to break it out. Some in the party lamented leaving ice axes behind. It would have been helpful in the brush and on the steep heather slopes, but given a choice of axe vs. trekking poles, I'd opt for the poles. Go light, bring headlamps (*muy importante*) and travel safe.