

Alpine Scrambling Trip Report

Everett Mountaineers

Destination: Skyline Divide (Pt.6215)	Date of Trip: 2/9/2003
Map(s): USGS Groat Mtn. and GT #13 Mt Baker	Scramble Rating: WS
Guidebook:	Summit Height: 6215
Trailhead: Skyline Divide	Elevation Gained: 2800'
Miles Round Trip: 12	

Leader: **Hal Watrous**

Driving Instructions: **I-5, Hwy 542 to 1 mile east of Glacier Ranger Station. Turn South on Road 39 for 1 block, then take immediate left on Road 37. Followed to as high as we could with snow levels. Parked at 10.4 miles from Hwy 542 elevation 3400', 3 miles short of TH.**

Ascent Route: **From car follow Road 37 about 3 miles to Skyline Divide TH. Signage marked. Followed snow covered trail and bearings to North end of Skyline Divide Pt. 5884. Continue following ridge line to Pt. 6215.**

Descent Route: **Same**

Weather conditions: **Clear up high; 28 degrees up to 35 during day. Beautiful sunny skies. Avalanche danger low. Nor shear layers found at this time, nor any signs of avalanches seen.**

Trip Summary	From	To	Elapsed Times
	Carpool:6 am	Trailhead:845 am	23/4 hours
	Trail head: 9:15 am	Summit: 12:30 pm	31/4 hours
	Summit: 3:00 pm	Trailhead:5:15 pm	21/4 hours

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

Trip Comments: This was substitute destination for Glacier Creek Gorge, just west of here on Road 39. We opted for change due to reported heavy snowmobile use on road 39, and info provided by Glacier Ranger Station that snow levels were high enough to drive up close to trailhead for Skyline Divide. We had a 3-mile walk to TH. It was also upgraded to a moderate Winter Scramble from a Snowshoe trip, at the request of signups, who were all scrambles.

Our decision to switch worked. Stunning day, with great variation in snow types, from beautiful wind crust, etchings, safe cornices, and surface Hoar. No sign of any avalanches of any kind. You can follow the ridge with lots of room to explore. Skiers were using the East side of Divide getting quite a ride. We followed the ridge, negotiating established cornices. Depending on sun and wind, you could have 3 different variations of top layer of snow in a 10' square area. This appears safe to do in most avalanche conditions, because the ridge top is generally wide enough and treed to allow for safe passage. .Because the leeward side was steep and convex, we chose not to put pressure on ridge tops however, by staying back.

Views over to Baker, Lincoln Peak, Colfax Peak, and Heliotrop Ridge. Climbers missed opportunity to climb Baker today, as we saw no one with binoculars. Also, views over to Shuksan, Table Mtn. super. 360 degree views with uncountable peaks to identify.

This is a superb destination for a easy to moderate scramble or snowshoe trip especially when the snow level is high and road walk portion is not long. The trip to first peak 5884' is largely a snowshoe trip. There is one steep but not exposed hillside with safe short run-out that might leave party members feeling like their "hanging out". You could go around this too. The trail gradient is an easy hike in summertime. Beyond the first peak is largely a scramble up the other peaks.