

# Do your homework before you're up Cheat Creek



**INTO THE OUTDOORS**  
BY JAYSON JACOBY

I has been brought to my attention that portions of last week's column dealing with snow camping may have had the potential to encourage novices to put themselves in dangerous positions by attempting a trip based only on my suggestions.

This was not, of course, my intention. I would like to clarify what I did intend in order to prevent any further misinterpretation.

First, the column was clearly not meant to serve as a final equipment list for the prospective snow camper. This would seem obvious, considering I didn't mention what snow camping actually entails.

Rather, I only intended to spur interest in the experience and to inform people that snow camping is not for experts only.

I fully expected readers who might be intrigued by the thought of camping in the snow — either through various guidance on the subjects or by consulting with experienced snow campers embarking on an outing.

Although I feel this was clearly stated in the column as it was printed, due to space limitations a paragraph that might have made the point even more clear was omitted.

In that paragraph I explicitly stated snow camping should not be attempted without taking either of the two steps I mentioned earlier.

The inclusion of that section might have made my purpose — to interest people in snow camping and to encourage them to find out how — more clear than it was.

And finally, the clothing suggestions were clearly incomplete and were merely specific things I have found to work. By emphasizing the need for professional guidance before attempting an actual trip, I expected that other ideas and recommendations would be available to ensure that novices are fully exposed to the full range of ideas concerning proper snow camping equipment.

Now, for those of you who have taken those steps and are prepared for a trip, let's look at one that's not too difficult and is also a lot of fun.

While options for snow camping are about as unlimited as those for summertime camping, it's always nice to have a specific destination in mind when planning a trip.

One excellent destination that's not too far from the beaten path is Wild Cheat Meadow, a 10-acre opening in a dense old growth Douglas Fir forest along Cheat Creek in the Willamette National Forest southwest of Mt. Jefferson.

To get to the Cheat Creek trail, drive on Highway 22 east of Salem to the Whitewater road, which is about halfway between Idahna and Marion Forks. If you go past the highway bridge over Whitewater Creek, which is also the boundary between Linn and Marion counties, you've gone too far.

Follow the Whitewater road — which is not plowed of snow — for about four miles, keeping to the left (uphill) at a "Y" junction a mile from the highway, to the well-marked trailhead just before the road crosses Cheat Creek and makes a sharp right turn. There is a remarkable view of the west side of 10,495-foot Mt. Jefferson, Oregon's second-highest peak, from the road just a few hundred yards before the trailhead. The summit of this impressive peak is nearly 8,000 feet above this point, and this view of the mountain might be the best from any road.

As of last Saturday, the first mile of the Cheat Creek trail was mostly free of snow. This delightful path winds steadily upward, roughly following frothy Cheat Creek while crossing several of its smaller, spring-fed tributaries and always surrounded by big trees.

All along the trail are excellent spots to stop and photograph the numerous small waterfalls or the many downed logs that cross the creek.

At about the two-mile point, the trail swings away from the creek and climbs gently until reaching the meadow.

This wide expanse of sparkling, unbroken snow makes a good stopping point, and there are good camping sites all around.

The last mile or so of the trail before the meadow was snow-covered last weekend, but the trail is well-blazed and because of that and the various animal prints, it is not difficult to follow.



There are spectacular views of Mt. Jefferson from the trailhead at Wild Cheat Creek. Hikers facing the challenge should be fully prepared with the necessary equipment and advice.

This is a fairly strenuous hike, though, gaining nearly 1,300 feet on the way to the meadow. But the scenery is reason enough to take your time getting up there.

Weather conditions are, naturally, quite variable in the mountains. Anyone interested in making this trip should be sure to fully prepare for any unexpected weather, and as I

mentioned before, consult a professional source before making this — or any other — snow camping trip.

Jayson Jacoby is a sports reporter for the Emerald.

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PKP '1' d. Kut & Phil 52-39/M1  
Run & Shoot d. SAE 52-23/M1  
Sigma Chi '1' d. Sigma Chi '3' 77-55/M2  
ATO 2B d. Kappa Sigma HB — forfeit/M2  
Sigma Chi '2' d. ATO 2A 75-40/M2  
Rim Job d. Boerd — forfeit/M2  
TKE—Party Fools d. Fiji '3' — forfeit/M3  
Penetrators d. Criminal Apathy 59-21/M3  
Silent Warriors d. Well Dunn 52-43/M3

Team Dougy d. Wookie Jan 49-18/M3  
Friday, Jan. 17  
Satan's Helpers d. Slick and Quick 47-9/M2  
Outdoor Pursuers d. Theta Chi '2' 41-39/M2  
Tree's Team d. Phi Psi B1 71-58/M2  
The Brucksters d. Phi Psi B2 54-33/M2  
Saturday, Jan. 18  
Two to None d. Sigma Nu 68-38/M2  
Phi B d. Phi C — forfeit/M2  
Deltas d. Nepal for Breakfast 74-49/M2  
No Hops d. Earth, Wind and Fire 82-51/M2  
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