

French Creek II: Headin' out West



INTO THE OUTDOORS
BY JAYSON JACOBY

Last week I started a two-part series on the French Creek valley in the Old Cascades east of Salem. Last week's column dealt with the eastern side of the valley, and today I'll talk about some of the interesting places on the western side.

Drive to the French Creek road by taking Highway 22 east of Salem to the Breitenbush River bridge just before entering Detroit. Take this paved road to the left and drive four miles, where the pavement runs out.

Then turn left at the "Y" junction, which leads steeply uphill. Although the road is steep, it's neither narrow nor rough. Because of variable snow conditions it might not be possible to reach the two trailheads I'll describe, but it's an easy trip with cross-country skis or on foot.

Whichever way you go, continue on the main road about four miles from the end of the pavement. Just after climbing two consecutive switchbacks, take the second road to the right. The first spur road, the one to avoid, goes downhill and past a small pond. The one you want continues almost parallel with the main road for a short distance and is level.

Follow this road through a small clearing and past a power-line tower to the end of the road. From here the Cedar Lake trail leads north and south.

Heading south, the trail leads down French Creek ridge to Cedar Lake, and then back up to the other trailhead described last week.

But a more interesting goal is just one-quarter mile north: Phantom Natural Bridge. This rock arch, about 20 feet high and 15 feet across, can be reached by a short spur of the main trail, only about a five-minute walk from the end of the road.

Cedar Lake can be seen through the arch, as well as the East fork of the French Creek road above Opal Lake. Although Phantom Bridge is one of the few natural bridges in Oregon and it's prominently shown on the Willamette National Forest map, many people haven't actually seen it.

Care should be taken when walking around the arch, though, especially in wet or icy conditions. There is some moderate exposure.

Once you've seen the natural bridge — and if you weren't stopped too far down the road by snow — head back to the main road and continue about a half-mile farther to Knutson Saddle.

As you reach the summit of the ridge, where the road starts to head south, look on the left side of the road for the Dome Rock/Tumble Lake trailhead. The trail is fairly easy to see because it takes off from a wide spot in the road.

The trail heads south a short distance before reaching a junction. The south fork of the trail heads downhill about a mile to Tumble Lake, a five-acre pool

that sits at the base of high cliffs. A loop trip is possible here, as the trail (it's actually an old road past the lake) leads down the Tumble Creek canyon to Highway 22. The highway trailhead is just about a mile before the French Creek road junction.

The alternate trip — and the one to take on a clear day — winds up the slopes of Dome Rock to the 4,859-foot summit. This moderately difficult trail is just over a mile long, but it climbs in mostly gradual switchbacks up open rock slopes to the top.

The view from the broad, flat summit is extensive, ranging from Mt. Hood to the north and Mt. Jefferson, Three Fingers Jack, Mt. Washington and the Three Sisters farther south.

The steep northern slopes of Dome Rock are impressive, too. The view here takes in Cedar Lake as well as the entire Little North Fork valley to the west. On exceptionally clear days the rolling hills of the Coast Range can be seen, as well.

None of these trails to Phantom Bridge, Tumble Lake or Dome Rock are suited for cross-country skiing. But they aren't difficult for hikers or those with snowshoes, especially the shorter trail to Phantom Bridge.

As with the eastern side of the French Creek valley, visitors are usually rare on the western side, making the entire area ideal for outdoor enthusiasts who don't have the time for extended trips into wilderness areas but who want to have an area all to themselves.

Jayson Jacoby is a sports reporter for the Emerald.

Byrne invited to Florida

University Athletic Director Bill Byrne has been invited to visit the University of Florida to discuss filling the school's vacant athletic director position, according to a statement released by Oregon Sports Information.

"The program at Florida is of such stature that I want to find out more about it," Byrne said in the statement. "I will accept their invitation to visit their campus. I haven't been seeking other employment, but I have sent them a completed application form and a resume upon their request."

R.I.M. RESULTS

Basketball

Score/League
Feb. 10
Bud Omen d. Phi A — forfeit/M1
Kappa Sigma I d. The Funky Dreads — forfeit/M1
Fiji '2' d. Young Hall Borderrun 49-30/M2
N.A.C. d. Ball Handlers 55-41/M2
Too Short d. Fiji '1' 69-64/M2
There Was One? d. Chaos 74-67/M2
Hawaiian Air d. All-Pau 48-36/M2
The Gravy Boats d. The Hovering Llammas 58-50/M2
In-n-out d. The Bud Men 62-50/M2
Sig Ep '1' d. See Ya 55-41/M2
Hackin's Brothers d. Team Turd 39-37/M3
Barcelona Bound d. KGB's 39-20/M3

Basketball First Round Playoff Schedule

Date/Time (p.m.)
Women's League
Feb. 18/4:35
Kappa Alpha Theta v. The (Non)
Commitments
Skywalkers v. Randoms

Co-Ed League

Feb. 18 4:35
Spurtoni Bellbottoms v. Pike Good
Feb. 18/5:35
Dymnt v. Muskrats
Waldominators v. Internationals

Men's Dorm

Feb. 13/4:35
Sensitive Artists v. Team Dougy
The Coup v. Well Done
Feb. 13/5:35
Wookie Team v. Riley Meet Me

Men's 3

Feb. 13/5:35
Pull my Finger v. TKE

Phi Psi C v. Victoria's Secret Champs v. Criminal Apathy
Feb. 14/5:35
Hackin' Bros v. Beta X
Beta Hops v. Team Turd
Feb. 18/3:35
Crazy Cupheads v. Kappa Sigma 3B
The Tadjiks v. Sigma Nu C2
Feb. 18/4:35
KGB's v. Phi A
Feb. 18/5:35
Scraps v. The Have-Nots
Fear of 5 v. Sigma Nu C1

Men's 2

Feb. 13/3:35
Sigma Chi v. Tators
Sigma Chi 3 v. Rim Job
Feb. 13/4:35
ATO 2B v. ATO 2A
Feb. 14/3:35
Theta Chi 2 will receive a bye
Bricklers v. Phi Psi B1
Feb. 14/4:35
Trees Team v. Phi Psi B2

Outdoor Pursuits v. Dubusk
Feb. 15/11:00 a.m.
Earth Wind, Fire v. Phi B
Sigma Nu v. Beta 1
Feb. 15/12:00
DedDed v. Delias
Pike II v. Air Jesus
Feb. 15/1:00
Lambda Chi v. Arch Enemies
Vigilante Justice v. Dika
Feb. 17/3:35
Sig Ep 1 v. Hovering Llammas
Fiji 1 v. Gravy Boats
See Ya v. Ball Handlers
Bud Men v. All-Pau
Feb. 17/4:35
Fiji 2 v. Chaos
In-n-Out v. Young Hall B.R.
Feb. 17/5:35
Kappa Sig 2A v. Theta Chi 4
Hair Club Men v. Delta Upsilon
Urine Trouble v. Beards
Chase Us v. Green Axe

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