

CLIMB PROSPECTUS BROKEN TOP CIRCUMNAVIGATION

Climb: Circumnavigation of Broken Top in the Three Sisters Wilderness
Date: A Saturday in August
Time: Leave the Broken Top Trailhead at 0800 (Revised!)
Leader: Bob Speik
Goal: We will go as a group, traveling at a social pace

Broken Top, at 9,175 feet, is about 1,000 feet lower than the Three Sisters. On a clear day, the surrounding peaks and Mt. Washington, Three Finger Jack, Mt. Jefferson and Mt. Hood can all be photographed from the summit block.

Broken Top is an ancient volcano. Like Mount St. Helens, it forms a very rough horseshoe. It was shaped by implosion and the subsequent collapse of the summit. Two glaciers continue to erode the soft material of Broken Top. The Crook Glacier lies within the east-facing crater and the Bend Glacier skirts its northern side. We will traverse across the steep and crevassed Bend Glacier, after photographing its beautiful glacial tarn just emerging from under the heavy snows of winter.

We will meet at the Broken Top Trail Head at the end of the 380 Road off the 370 Road north of Todd Lake. Be advised that the 370 Road is not maintained for passenger cars; plan on 45 minutes to drive to the Trail Head from Todd Lake. From near the 380 Road's Broken Top Trail Head, we will walk along a summer climber's trail just above the stream flowing from springs and the melt of the Bend Glacier to the Glacier, contour low along the Glacier, scramble up across the North West Ridge and down to a spring fed stream. We will follow the stream southwest to the Broken Top Trail from Green Lakes and walk back to the cars at the trailhead. The ramble is a scenic gain of 1,000 feet in about three miles to the outlet of the un-named tarn and a small pass leading to the glacier, a mile walk along the sloping glacier, a scramble over the North West Ridge and down cross-country about mile to the Broken Top forest trail and a walk back to the cars of about 3 miles. The computer analysis puts the mileage at 9 miles, 2249 feet! The total elevation gain and loss is about 2, 850 according to MapTeck.

The purpose of this adventure is for every-one in the group to have a fine time. We will climb together as a group, the stronger climbers voluntarily carrying any group gear. That being said, there is one good turn around point for those whose bodies may not be up to their high spirits. The trail back from the Pass is straightforward and there are often groups on the trail. No one can return alone. Remember, it is not the mountain or the route; it is the recollections of the shared adventure that we will take with us.

Heat exhaustion and "bonking" are the biggest problems we may encounter. If it is a hot day, at least two quarts of water must be carried for our planned 6 to 7 hour ramble. Bring an extra quart in the car for drinking just before and immediately after the climb. (Bring food to eat during the golden hour after we complete the ramble.) If it is a very sunny day, most of us will need to replace electrolytes: Gator-aid is the answer. Plan to eat about 200 calories of simple or complex carbohydrates (a ClifBar) each hour with a drink of water to avoid running out of stored glycogen and "bonking" or "hitting the wall".

Dark sunglasses are necessary. Sunscreen SPF 30 to 45, applied before you leave home is necessary. Apply the sunscreen to the underside of nose and ears to avoid serious burns from reflected sunlight. Repeat applications during the climb. You will need this protection even on an overcast day.

Wear light nylon pants and a long sleeved nylon shirt and head and neck sun protection. You may want to wear short gaiters to keep the snow out of your crampon compatible light boots. Bring a light insulating layer and a wind layer for your upper body. A strong cold jet stream often rakes Broken Top. Shorts are not a good idea, but wear them if you must. However, if the forecast weather is cold with precipitation and wind, come prepared for the exertion of the climb and also for possible inactivity, as we might have to sit-out an emergency, high on the mountain. See below for boot recommendations.

You will need a good summit pack to carry your possible four pounds of water, sun screen, ten essentials, extra layers and CliffBars and bagels. I will bring a filter and we can refill at mid point in the day.

Crampons and ice axe will be necessary because the glacial snow is hard and fairly steep. We should be able to skirt obvious crevasses; however, we will bring a short rope to "yard" anyone out of a hole. We will bring some long runners and biners to anchor the rope as a hand line for traversing the ridge if needed. Hiking poles are very helpful in distributing some seventeen percent of the up-hill work to your upper body. Your boots must be the lightest boots that will provide for light crampons and accommodate your ten miles of hiking. We will stop for blister care and other adjustments. Just tell us!

Technical glacier walking skills will be reviewed, and be aware that the scramble over the ridge may be steep and unmarked. Poles help a great deal.

You will be expected to sign the GROUP ROSTER, INFORMED CONSENT, LIABILITY RELEASE AND SIGN-IN AGREEMENT and have a great time.

Please bring your pack with water and essential to the trailhead, ready to go. Be sure to have your ice axe and crampons on your pack. Please have your crampon compatible boots or strong high top shoes on your feet for the short drive up the hill from Todd Lake to the trailhead. Your pack should not weigh much more than about 15 pounds. A scale will be available to test your skill at selecting gear for Fit, Experienced, Light and Fast fun and adventure around Broken Top!

On Belay!
Robert Speik, Leader

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