

Trip Report  
Mt. Hood – Sunshine Route  
5/20/06

Joe Flannery, Allen Light, Aaron Smith & Dave Slavensky decided to climb Mt. Hood via the Sunshine Route on the north side of the mountain. We headed out about 4:00 from Bend on Saturday afternoon and drove up to the Cooper Spur ski area hoping to make it up to the Cloud Cap Inn. Most climbs start at the Cloud Cap, but the heavy winter had the road covered with snow.

We decided to start at the Cooper Spur trail head which added about 3 miles of hiking and 2000' vertical gain. Our alarm went off around 1:00 am and we finally hit the trail about 1:45. The lower part of the trail was mostly steep and dirt, but we kept hitting more and more patches of snow until we arrived at the local cross country ski hut.

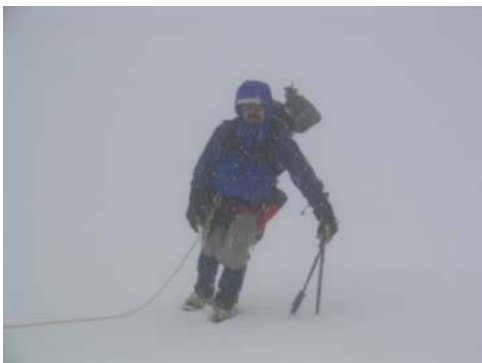


At the hut, we took a short break and then headed out up the Cooper Spur ridge making our way through the trees and finally breaking out into the open just as the sun was breaking the horizon! Great views of the Hood River Valley lights and a clear view of the mountain. (soon to disappear)



Working our way up the ridge further, we arrived at the stone hut and then headed west across the snowfield between the upper and lower Elliot Glaciers. Once across the snow field, we then climbed the ridge towards Horseshoe rock where we hit our first Bergschrund. The weather was deteriorating as we took a short break to melt some snow and fuel up.

We roped up to cross the Bergschrund and made our way up a crumbly rock band trying to achieve some purchase on the soft snow. Slowly we worked our way towards the Horseshoe rock in poor visibility until we hit the second Bergschrund directly below the rock at about 10,400'.



At this point, it was total white out, snowing and very windy. We searched for a way across without success. Since it was about 1:00 pm and conditions were not good, we decided to turn back. Once past the first Bergschrund, we stopped to put on our skis and snowboard while Joe, the only one walking, started

down. The rest of us made fresh tracks down the snow dome on fairly good snow, and then headed across the snow field back to the stone hut. Surprisingly, Joe made it to the hut just before we arrived – he was moving fast!

The trail out was lots of work as the snow was very soft and we were pretty tired from the climb. We made it back to the cars around 4:00 pm where we loaded up and drove back to Bend.

