

On Friday night, a mixture of 31 veteran and nouveau ski junkies headed for the wonders of Northwestern New Mexico, where the southern tip of the Rocky Mountains burst from the semi-desert lands of the Navaho and Pueblo Indians. This burning anticipation of great skiing with some of the most challenging hills in North America was soon diminished, however. Our Taos trip had what every ski trip dreads, a no snow in weeks report. Despite the best organizational efforts of TC Stan Broniak and ATC Ken "what me worry" Shapley, it was going to be packed powder and ice with no new snow for three days. The true irony was while Taos had no snow, our Houston departure was delayed 2.5 hours due to the snow storms that were blanketing the East coast. Our 1:30AM hotel arrival made for a lot of whining and sleepy faces as room assignments and lift tickets were dispersed. Needless to say our welcome to Taos hotel reception was cancelled.

The Taos Ski Valley was reached with two private bus departures from the hotel each morning, 7:30 & 9:00AM. Few people made the 7:30AM bus from Taos. Craig Campbell was one of the exceptions. Each morning like clockwork, Craig was there to greet the bus's arrival, eating his breakfast banana in one hand and waving with the other.

Saturday offered almost Spring-like ski conditions with a few locals skiing in shorts. Others, such as Wade Stevenson, could ski like a maniac dare devil, literally finding 10 foot cliffs not at all intimidating. For you novice skiers, don't follow this guy down the mountain unless you are prepared to fly and most likely crash and burn.

Sunday was cold and some of us were underdressed after being spoiled by Saturday's warmth. And the wind did blow. Burr, Burr, Burr. This gave a great excuse to shop around and see the tourist sites. In fact a few skiers, like Carrie Niemeyer, Dianne McKenzie, and Debra Barber definitely should have won some fashion award. They actually worked some skiing into their shopping schedules. Bob "where are the honey roasted peanuts" Gottlieb, Pam "who took my handcuffs" Smith, Robert Knupp, and Michelle Baker grabbed a few drinks at the St. Bernard Pub, known for the world's best Margaritas, before our 4:30 bus back to the hotel.

That night, like the one before, would find Stuart Traver, Bob Knupp, Alex Krawtzow, Frank Adams and others in the hot tub. Sorry guys there was only one hot tub and not many women.

No wonder you guys drank most of the beer. Also that night at the Happy Hour in Ken "what me worry" Shapley's room we discovered one of apparently many hidden talents of Michelle Baker. Michelle held the room awestruck as she did her reenactment of an Indian Ceremonial dance she saw earlier that day. Seeking food and more entertainment, we headed for the great dining Taos offered. Mary Kay Kitchens, between courses, got a rise out of everyone, (including the napkin), with her innovative napkin tricks.

Monday was great skiing. Although there still wasn't any new snow, it wasn't crowded like Saturday and Sunday and the weather was great. Unfortunately, Cathy Willits, on the last run of the last day, injured her knee. Luckily, she brought her own doctor, Leroy Willits, to patch her up. During a lunchtime break at the mountain top restaurant, Ronnie Hotchkiss and Holly Richert found time to brake into an impromptu C&W dance.

Later that night, we had a pizza party, as our send off, in the hotel party room. And believe it or not this hotel pizza was outstanding and they really made it there. Derek Shoobridge missed Monday's events due to a business trip. Ladaune Ashley used a 4 foot wooden cutout of an Indian woman as a Derek stand-in during our group photo shoot. Frank Adams has the best story ever about two dogs in love. Ask him about it!

Tuesday, before our airport departure, many of us did the tourist thing through Taos. Art galleries on your right and art galleries on your left. As we turned the corner Alex Krawtzow said, "Let me guess, more Indian Art". Some of those painting were over \$3,000, and it looked like your kid could have painted them. End of that story. Mike Stenberg bought a T-shirt that said, "If it slopes, I ski it. If it pores, I drink it. If it whines, I date it". Sounds like Mike to me.

