

# Bonds Trip Report

November 2, 1997

- A Long Day
- Early rise 2:30am and on the road
- Conversation along the way makes it feel like mid-morning
- Darkness at the trailhead Lincoln Woods Ranger Station and the rain is falling. Headlamps pierce the darkness. The light reflects off the falling rain to give that winter snow effect usually encountered while driving in the car.
- 5:25am, cars parked, gear on, we are on our way.
- Across the bridge, over the powerful Pemi. Water rushes down from the mountains after last night's torrential rains. Along with the melting snow of the previous week.
- Into the darkness we ride our mountain bikes. Kim in front, I am apprehensive as we travel over the railroad ties. Bounce, bounce and a little nervous.
- The rain is still falling.
- Slip, slide and down for the first time. Toe clip strap comes undone. Big hiking boots and clips increase the difficulty of getting good foot placement on the pedals.
- A wet bridge ahead, easy now. Slide and down. That makes twice. Ow! My knee, right on the kneecap. Get up and ride. Keep going. This is fun and different.
- At the three mile bridge in no time. Cross the bridge.
- Kim has the principles which makes him decide not to support the usage fees and to honor the sign saying no bikes. I pay the fee and I "don't see" the sign. We ride on.
- The sky is brightening and the rain is stopping.
- More railroad ties. We clear some branches from the trail and ride over some branches.
- Up and over. Kim is behind me for this comical view of me going head over heels over my handle bars. I thought this must have been the most comical looking scene. Some how my front tire jammed in between some railroad ties as I had tried to go over a branch. Back tire up and now my legs are up over my head. No injury, fun. We ride on.
- Just under mile 5 and we drop the bikes at the junction of the Bonds Trail. Time to hike.
- I am and have been thinking about today as being VERY long. I anticipate high levels of fatigue. We walk on.
- A short time later Kim stops us - a moose! There! Approximately 15 yards off in the density of firs is a moose. I see its head and hump. It senses us and stealthily moves down the ravine. I have not seen a moose in the forest during my previous 40 plus trips.
- The trail is nice. The brook is rushing with water. Beautiful even if the clouds are here and visibility above is nil.
- Easy brook crossings with nice foot plants on the stones.
- Up we go. After passing a wonderfully created stairway of stone. We come onto this exposed area of sand. This small ridge circles around to the north and west with the rushing waters below. Kim indicates where the peaks are, but we cannot see anything.
- A short time later we come upon three hikers enjoying some breakfast. We exchange commentaries on the weather. They had stayed last night and exclaimed how the winds were roaring overhead and through the trees. It is approximately 8:00am. Where is the coffee and Sunday paper? We hike on.
- We stopped on occasion to perform some trail maintenance. There is some heavy water on some sections of the trail. Kim leads the way in punching a channel over the side of the trail to let the water flow down.
- Kim anticipates Bondcliff Summit by 9:00am.
- We climb through the scrub and into the clouds the warm weather keeps the clouds covering the summit like a toupee. Kim has joined me on this trip because as he has exclaimed the

views from the Bonds are magnificent. We see nothing. Then again I see 1000-foot drops to the west side of this ridge. This is awesome. I cannot believe these types of cliffs are here in the Whites. We go on.

- Around 9:30am we stop for some food and beverage. I learned from Kim today. During his trips into the mountains he stops every 2 hours for sustenance. This is working very well for me. My food for the day consists of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches made on multi-grain bagel bread. Plus one ham and cheese for a treat. Along with; apples, cookies, PowerBars.
- We continue on. Mt. Bond is not too far away and we are on its summit in no time. Again, we recognize how today's weather is contributing to our efforts. A week earlier we would have encountered much more snow and ice making our traverse much slower and difficult.
- Summit - Mt. Bond! As Kim had indicated to get to the top we would have to make our way over some TV and refrigerator sized boulders. There was even 8-foot face which required good hand placement to pull one's self up. I liked this.
- Both on Bond Cliff and Mt. Bond Kim had stepped aside a short distance from the top in order to have me summit. Thank you Kim. I enjoyed the pace he had set all day and the idea of experiencing the summit first was inconsequential.
- We descend the Bonds Trail towards Guyot and the junction for the West Bond spur.
- Kim mentioned how he would like to go over the Guyot shelter. My comments to him was, I am 50-50 on this. I think he should go over and enjoy the side trip and at the same time, splitting up hikers is not a prudent thing to do. We hiked on.
- We arrived at the junction at approximately 10:20. Kim started down the spur trail. I quickly suggested he shoot over to Guyot and have fun and I will do West Bond. He agreed. Who ever got back first would await the other at the junction.
- I headed down the trail. What a beautiful trail this was, narrow, balsams and Laurentian.
- I enjoyed the quiet and pace.
- There were some blow downs from the night before which were not difficult to overcome. I did a little trail maintenance along the way.
- Continue to wind my way towards West Bond. A couple of large boulders and I am there.
- Thoughts of Roger and wishing he were here. Thoughts of my dad. Sending all my love and energy his way to make him strong. Enjoying the solitude and quiet within the clouds.
- I stay for a little while and now it is back to meet Kim at the junction.
- This trail is so nice.
- There is Kim sitting and waiting.
- He tells me we have experienced the first problem of the day. He was at Guyot and he went to phone his friends. Bent over to use his phone with a Gatorade bottle under his arm - open bottle that is. Spilled right onto the phone - zap, telecommunications done. I say to him better to have a problem like that versus some kind of injury. We head up the trail to Mt. Bond it is 11:00am.
- As we walk along the ridge past Mt. Bond, Kim is in front and I am walking watching where my steps are taking me. There is something that draws my attention to the right (west). I raise my head. Whoa!!!! There is the east face of West Bond with multiple slides carved into it. It is huge as it appears out of nowhere. I am overwhelmed. I shout "Thank You" as I look to the west and then upwards to the sky.
- The skies are beginning to open. The clouds are moving fast.
- Up ahead the ridge of Bondcliff begins to expose itself. Yes, maybe that is Owls Head and the Franconia ridge. I cannot believe we are going to get some views. I had thought to myself that there would be nothing for the day.
- Yes! A patch of blue overhead. Now I knew why Kim wanted to return to the Bonds. My energy and spirit is soaring now. We hike on.
- As we make our way up to Bondcliff we look towards Owls Head and notice this ridge that makes its way up to the summit. Kim says, "Look's doable."

- We peer over the cliffs and look at some of the chimneys. I say, "Look's doable." Also, we discuss what this would be like in the wintertime. I think that I would stay quite far away from these edges. I have come to the edge and looked beyond.
- We summit Bondcliff around noon. Sitting on the south side of the large cairn we eat. Instead of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich this time I now enjoy a ham and cheese with lettuce.
- We enjoy the vistas. Kim tests my orientation by asking me where I think the bikes are. I say that I think they are to the southwest of the small mountain, which lies to the southeast of us. Kim thinks differently and checks his map. He is right according to the map. The bikes should be to the southeast of that small mountain. This would be confirmed later on as we are on the other side of that peak.
- It is approximately 12:30 and now we are heading back.
- I am a slow at descending, I think to myself. I know Kim is a mountain goat like Roger when it comes to descending. I remind myself "a good day is a safe day."
- We are moving pretty good. Kim stops to remove a layer. I am in a groove now. I am moving quickly with long well placed strides. I am proud and surprised by my descent. I think the reason for this capability is the number of hikes which I have now been on since late September - I am becoming a mountain man.
- Kim catches up. I shed my top layer.
- Kim puts himself in mountain goat gear and he is gone. I follow.
- We reach that nice stairway. Down we go. We cover the major incline in no time. We are now back along the Black Brook.
- Enjoying the weather and the pace.
- We stop to enjoy. The ridge above and the brook beside us offers a beautiful sight.
- We wonder if we will catch those campers. It appears they made it to the Bondcliff summit and returned down. We saw a few footprints. We calculate that they are nearly out.
- We hike on.
- We make it back to the bikes. There are the campers.
- We check out an old railroad bridge. According to the guide this bridge needs repair but no decision is being made. It is either too old and unsafe in which it should be taken down, or it should be preserved because of its historical age.
- I put my head under some of the rushing waters of the Black Brook. Feels great.
- We begin our bike trek.
- Biking in the light is much different and more pleasurable than this mornings ride.
- We are handling the railroad ties, branches, and rocks with much greater skill this time. I am hoping to improve upon my three falls this morning.
- We are back to the bridge in no time, now for the three miles back to the parking lot.
- We are cruising now. The rain begins to fall. This is fun. Zoom!
- 3:25 we are back to the parking lot.
- Bikes are dirty. We are dirty.
- We wash the bikes in the river. We change into some dry clothes.
- Forty-Seven peaks down, one more to go! 47!
- A very good day.