



**Avalanche 1 Extension:  
Putting the skills to use  
(with a "Guardian Angel")**

**Trip Notes**

# **Avalanche 1 Extension**

## **Putting the skills to use (with a "Guardian Angel")**

So you have done a Level 1 course, you have all those brand new skills and lots of new knowledge but frankly the course has got you a little worried about all the things you have to consider and all the problems you might encounter are seeming a little overwhelming.

Not to worry we have put his program together with all of this in mind and we have seen the concerns that people have after completing the Level I program. So we go out in the field and spend the day with you in charge, leading the group and making decisions for the group. But at the back of the group is your guide and mentor who will add advice, point out things you might have forgotten and help practically expand your skills beyond the Level 1 course.

Think of this as having your own "Guardian Angel" along.

**Itinerary:** This program is conducted entirely in the field. This will be a long day and we expect to be in the field for at least eight hours. We will be traveling on either skis or snowshoes and you can expect to put in several miles of travel. Skiers can expect some down skiing or boarding and snowshoers can expect some steeper uphill and descents. We will look at the practical application of the classroom knowledge you gained and put it all into the context of a day tour into avalanche terrain. You will be asked to evaluate the conditions, come up with a tour plan, evaluate your companions and then put your plan into action. Along the way you will be looking for the safest paths of travel and as conditions change so should your plan. Then you will be looking for some good down skiing or boarding that will maximize the fun but not compromise the safety. Snowshoers can treat the outing as a backcountry climbing trip also looking for fun and safety.

**Location:** The course is held on-snow in the Bishop or Mammoth areas. We want ready access to the best snow and conditions so we will make our decision of where to go as the course time draws close. We also want to see if we can get you somewhere you have not been before so we will be asking students as to their past local experience. We will facilitate car pools to the snow each day but you should make sure your vehicle is prepared for winter travel.

**Meeting place and time:** For Mammoth based programs we start the day by meeting at the Stellar Brew Cafe at 8:00 am. This is situated on the north side of Highway 203 (the road to Mammoth from Highway 395). This is on the right side of the road just after the first traffic light you find coming into town. If needed the phone there is 760-924-3559.

For Bishop based programs we will meet the first day at 8:00 am at the world headquarters of Sierra Mountain Center, 218A South Main Street, in Bishop. We are on the east side of Highway 395 in the second block south of the south most traffic light (intersection of Line Street and Main Street/Highway 395). Or if you prefer, just across from the Mountain Rambler Brewery.

**Dates and Prices:** Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site for dates and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or canceling. Price includes instruction, permits, a syllabus and loan of avalanche beacons, shovels, and probes.

**Ratios:** We use a ratio of no more than six participants to one instructor for in the field sessions.

**Notes and other information:** The course does not include food or lodging. Please let us know if you need assistance making arrangements and you can refer to our local lodging information sheet for suggestions.

The night before or morning of, program participants will be expected to pull up local avalanche information and weather history and forecast, coming informed and ready to give their opinion of current conditions and what their concerns for the day might be.

The following resources are handy:

<http://patrol.mammothmountain.com/Home.aspx>

<http://www.esavalanche.org/>

<http://mammothweather.com>

**Prerequisites:** A previous Level 1 or equivalent course that conforms to AIARE standards. We will be using AIARE terminology in our instruction and while this is not a USA standard we expect students to be familiar with the terms. You need to know the basics of safe travel techniques, avalanche rescue and the basics of snow pit tests.

# Equipment List for Avalanche 1 Extension

The following list is a general guide and will assist you in packing for the program. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have specific questions regarding equipment or if you need assistance prior to making a purchase. The following list will vary according to the time of year, and your individual requirements. Items marked with a \* are items that we rent or we can coordinate rentals with a local shop. When packing **THINK LIGHTWEIGHT!**

## **Essentials**

- Beacon. We provide these if you do not have one.
- Shovel. Small collapsible style. We provide these if you do not have one.
- Probe. We provide these if you do not have one.
- On the snow transportation\*. This can be snowshoes, skis or splitboard. With skis and splitboards you will need skins. For telemark and alpine touring rentals call Mammoth Mountaineering (760) 934-4191. We rent snowshoes. A split board will get you up, but we will not be climbing for turns so carrying a board up might not be worth it for the few turns you will get in.
- Footwear. Ski/board boots, or Sorrels or heavy boots for snowshoers.\* We rent mountaineering boots that are suitable for snowshoeing.
- Poles.\*

## **Clothing**

- 2 pair synthetic or wool socks. Ski socks are great since they go above the boot cuff.
- Gaiters. Necessary only if pants don't cover boot top. If there is a gap, snow will get in and your feet will be wet and cold.
- Long underwear top and bottom.
- Warm pants, to layer between base and waterproof layer, such as softshell fabric. Get a lined style if you tend to run colder.
- Another fuzzy sweater top, such as fleece or Polartec.
- Pile/fleece/softshell fabric jacket.
- Light down jacket; synthetic fill is second choice. This is optional & can replace the previous item.
- Good quality rain/wind pants and rain jacket. Must be water proof and jacket must have a hood. Don't skimp on your rain gear.
- Warm hat that covers the ears.
- Visor hat (for sun).
- Neck gaiter.
- Lightweight windstopper-type gloves.
- Shell gloves or mittens.

## **Etc.**

- Daypack. A pack of 25-35 L is plenty big enough.
- Sunglasses, high quality with keeper leash. Wrap-around or a type with side shields are recommended. If you wear corrective glasses you might want a second pair.
- Sunscreen and lip screen. SPF 30+. Make sure the lip stuff actually contains a sunscreen. A 1oz. bottle will be sufficient.
- Two 1 L plastic water bottles.
- Thermos for a hot drink during the day.
- Camera/phone camera.
- Pencil for making notes in the AIARE notebook.
- Goggles and a face mask are great if it becomes stormy.
- Hand warmers if you tend to run cold.

## **Food**

- Snacks and lunch for the day.

## **Vehicle**

- Make sure that your vehicle is winterized with anti-freeze and bring tire chains. Be prepared for wintery and stormy travel.