BOOTPRINTS

Volume 13 Issue 4 **July 2008**

2008 Solstice Hike by John Klebes

nontinuing our summer solstice tradition for Our sixth year Rick, Ed, and I took on the Wapack End-to-Ender. A 1-day thru-hike of the 21-mile Wapack Trial that follows a skyline route along the summits of Watatic, Pratt, New Ipswich, Barrett and Temple mountains and finally ascending the Pack Mondanocks! The Wapack trail has a generous helping of open ledges and rocky peaks providing breathtaking views of Mount Monadnock, the Berkshires, the Green Mountains, Boston, and the White Mountains. While 21-miles may sound a little easy for Ed's Death March Mania I can assure you this trail has its share of ups and downs. Leaving the house a little after 4am we meet up at the northern trailhead at around 6:30am. After



staging cars we were on the trail at 7:45am. In Massachusetts the Wapack trail shares a common path with the Mid-state Trail as we climbed steadily up Mt Watatic stopping to check out the remains of an old lean-to shelter and wildflowers along the trail.

From Mt Watatic we enjoyed very nice, but hazy, views from the open rocky summit. Dropping down off the summit we were soon crossing the state border into New Hampshire. Hiking past Binney Pond we saw signs of a very active beaver population and more dragonflies than you have ever seen in one place lighting on the bog bridge by the pond. A stone wall jutted out into the pond was a testament to the changes the beavers had made to the area. As we climbed Pratt Mountain we had a great view looking back at Binney Pond from an overlook before continuing on to New Ipswich Mountain. Next we climbed Barrett Mountain where a stop to check out the Mountain Top Shelter finds us relaxing in

the camp chairs that someone left at the shelter. We just couldn't resist resting for a long spell enjoying the views from this restful spot.



From here we passed many old ski trails before dropping down to a road crossing near the remains of the foundation from the Wapack Lodge, once a leading center for skiing during the

1920's and '30s, but destroyed by a fire in 1993. This was followed by Conant Hill, Burton Peak and Holt Peak (Temple Mountain). Lots of ferns by the side of the trail and higher up blueberries everywhere! We should plan a return to this berry paradise when they ripen.

The section over Burton and Temple is called the skyline and is covered with huge stone cairns and sculptures of rock art all along the ridge. Most of the Wapack follows along, or is crisscrossed by, some of the best condition classic New England stone walls I have

ever seen.

We enter Miller State Park and are treated with a steep ascent to the summit and fire tower on Pack Monadnock; while worrying if we might be hit with a thunder storm. Our luck holds and we miss the storm. Then on over our final summit of North Pack Monadnock before hiking down to the car around 7:30pm. ~John Klebes Past Death March Hikes: The tradition all started in 2003 with Ed's Presidential Traverse on the solstice. We followed in 2004 with the Devil's Path in the Catskills and in 2005 the Franconia Notch/Pemi Loop. In 2006 we tried something different, a 2-day traverse of the 50-mile Monadnock-Sunapee-Greenway. And followed in 2007 with a 36-mile Old AT meets New AT in Connecticut. And now we add the Wapack Endto-Ender to the list for 2008.

Mt. Monadnock by Mike and Monica

On Sunday June 15th Mike and I got up checked the weather and decided to ioin up with Rob for his hike to Mt. Monadnock. We had not called; a no no for those who know in the club.

We arrived in the parking lot of the Rite Aid to find Rob alone. Apparently only one person had called for the hike. She arrived shortly and we learned she was a newcomer. This was to be her first hike with the club. She was wearing jeans and a tee-shirt and light hikers. We carpooled. Rob planned on going up the White Arrow trail, starting off from the park entrance off Rt 124. Mike and I had never gone up this way so that made it a more interesting

The weather was cloudy and cool, but somewhat humid. The hike was fun, even though no views could be found at the summit. Everyone got up and everyone got down with incident.

The part of this hike that impressed me was Rob. He did a wonderful job of guiding and instructing the newcomer in the tricks and nuances of hiking. I know we try to make a point of this at meetings and in membership letters, etc. But I want to take a moment to recognize Rob for the exceptional technique and friendly non patronizing manner in which he helped this newcomer feel comfortable and to ensure that she had a safe and pleasant day on the trail. Kudos to you Rob you are a fine example of a good hike leader and representative of the philosophy of the club. Thanks for the day.

Monica & Mike



PVHC Picnic September 7, 2008

Hold the date, the PVHC picnic is set for Sept. 7 at Mt Tom. It will be rain or shine, as we have the covered pavilion. (See page 2 for continuation)

There will be lots of good food and some hiking to our nearby favorite spots. We have a field near-by for some Frisbee. It is free to club members, except for the park entrance fee. Guests will be welcome for a small fee. If you want to join the committee, please contact Lisa Frigo at 786-4198. More information and directions will be in the next bootprints.

Battenkill Thrills - What You Missed Mike Reed

rst, some of you may be wondering, what's up with all the kills in New York? Sounds kind of violent. Not at all. "Kill" is the early Dutch word for rivers and streams, of course. And "batten," as far as I can figure in searching about a bit, may well have had something to do with mills established along this river that produced batten, wood strips used in either home or ship building, or perhaps to the use of battens in textile manufacturing. Sounds plausible, right?

So, if you weren't able to join us, what did you miss? First, the drive up to Cambridge, NY, where the Battenkill Riversports Campground is located. After exiting the Pike just over the Mass. - N.Y. state line, most of our time was spent on scenic Route 22, which wends its way through the mostly small towns and hamlets of New York that border first Massachusetts then Vermont. with first the Berkshires then the Green Mountains visible out our car windows to the east. This stretch is quite rural, with lots of farm fields, bordered at this time of year by field flowers (phlox and the like) in full bloom. Many of the towns along the way are dominated by late 1800s architecture, which I always enjoy seeing how people express themselves with.

Anyhow, after 2 hours on the road, and lots of lefts and rights and slow country drivers, we finally arrived, right on time - Norm must' a been a taxi driver in his previous life! And, well, it was kind of hot and steamy upon arrival; the first day of this year's early June heat wave. So, after checking in and standing around (in the shade) with all our gear, after having decided whether our paddle blades should be straight up or in performance mode, and after having picked out our preferred life-preserver style (big and bulky, faded blue or the more trim, faded orange and black - a tip to future Battenkillers: avoid the faded blue ones. I spent half the time on the river with it pressing up on my earlobes), we were loaded into two, fairly ancient vans which baked in the sun like ovens on wheels until the drivers thankfully started making their way to the launch area across the line into Vermont. Here, after debarking, there was a bit of jostling and maneuvering to get the kayak or canoe of choice - which I wasn't completely successful at. Norm having sidestepped in front of me to get that cool orange one I had my eye on. What color did I end up with? Why, faded blue again, of course.

In no time at all we were on the river, and it was way cool; that is, it immediately felt at least ten degrees cooler than the hot, graveled unloading area where I got outmaneuvered out of my canoe of choice by Stormin' Norman. But, you know, that blue kayak warn't so bad after all. It was fairly stable and didn't get stuck on the stream bed - the orange ones did, hah! So, I thought I had heard that the trip on the river was supposed to be 12 miles long, but the nice young man escorting us into the river said that it was a 17 mile trip. Whatever, it was long enough about 4.5 hours, with a stop for lunch halfway. According to Norm, the river was a bit low this year - low enough for him to get stuck a few times that is! Still, you had to pay attention at a number of spots to keep from kissing a boulder or getting spectacularly upended over one - which didn't happen to us this time out; well, not exactly. Two of us stared death in the eye and bobbed back up to later tell us the tales. More on that later.

The first half of the trip required a bit more of our attention, as I mentioned above; that is, you couldn't rest the paddle and daydream for very long at all before you had to paddle hard to get back to that portion of the river, right left or center, where you needed to be to avoid trouble. However, the second half of the trip allowed for more prolonged drifting with the current, which was gentler overall than previously. And, bird lovers take note: There were birds galore along this river reach, including cedar waxwings, red winged blackbirds, and shimmering, indigo blue swallows. I was also one of the few apparently to spot an otter running along the shore to my left,

with a fish clamped between its jaws. Nice. The weather was fair, with none of the threatened. possible thunder showers.

Other highlights: At our lunch spot beside a grange hall (in Arlington, Vt?), we were serenaded by a woman singing and strumming some tunes during the early stages of some

sort of reception being held there - sounded like | as this was a terrific weekend for the three a mix of Jewel, Crystal, Etheridge, Tori Amos and of us, Rob, John K. and I. We never

the like. Kudos to Dick and Sue for arranging this musical frosting on the kayaking cake for us. Another fun time along the way was a rope swing that Cindy Hibert spotted just after the second covered bridge we passed, this one about minutes upstream from campground; which I must admit to having been coaxed over to by Cindy, who Mike Gross and I subsequently had to coax and cajole into actually swinging on that same rope after we first gave it a try. The water temperature was just right, very refreshing; about 67 degrees I'd say.

The final highlight out on the river, aside from tipping myself into the river at about mile 12 (I just wanted to see what it was like, no big deal) was Tina and Chip's staring death in the face. Apparently, in deciding to pass under a low-hanging branch, Chip had to grab onto it firmly, most likely to keep from forcibly embracing it, and in so doing, brought the branch down upon Tina's head - or was it her kayak? Whatever, it appears that they both went under and their kayaks raced off without them. Somehow they extricated themselves, others further downstream rescued their craft, and they were only left with tales to tell – the best kind of mishaps. After this, we beached our kayaks, had a feast, gathered by the camp fire, and chatted - and swatted mosquitoes. Yet another fun weekend with the club. Thanks to Dick and Sue for putting this together. Happy trails, all.

Stratton Pond Backpack May 17-18,2008 By Lisa Frigo Schechtman

I wish more members could have joined us for a wonderful backpack to Stratton Pond,



dreamed that we would see some snow...not inches and inches but we saw it deep in the woods just before summiting Stratton mountain. A clear reminder of that very snowy record setting winter Vermont endured. Friday night Rob and I were trying to decide on the phone with John what our plan B might be if there were to be a rain down pour all day up north as predicted...but as we awoke Saturday morning blue skies greeted us. We began our car ride up north. Before entering the trail we stopped at nice little general store and bought a few little supplies...We ran into some nice GMC folk who were doing trail maintenance. We decided to go up over Stratton Mt the first day because who knew what the weather would be the next. The trail is nice and gradual, well maintained...you don't feel your climbing a 4000 footer...well sort of 3995. We had our lunch on the trail. met some nice people at the top who were staying in a little car taker house for the day. We also climbed the tower at the top of Mt Stratton to see some great views 60-70 miles easy. After a nice little rest we continued for another hour and a half to get to the shelter. Near the shelter is a nice spring we filled up our water bottles...

We greeted Stratton pond so big and beautiful on this spring day, too bad we can not see this pond from the shelter....but we walked down to the pond several times before dinner...after dinner, and before breakfast...this is the part of the trip I like the most it just makes you relax and unwind to see so much beauty. We put together a really nice dinner, cheese and crackers. 2 packages of tuna (one was spicy) mixed with alfredo noodles...we had some instant soup and we had tea and hot coco...it was getting cool out. I love Stratton pond shelter its a great place. Its a huge shelter well maintained probably can sleep twenty people. We shared the shelter with 3 other hikers...they went to bed early...John,



Rob and I played a couple hours of cosmic wimp out...it started to rain once we were in the shelter but we didn't care we were nice and warm. I think it got to about 40 at night. Well we were pretty tired and slept well. The next day we had a quick cup of oatmeal and hot drink and began to pack our things and head out we said our goodbyes to the fellows we met. We decided to take a walk

around the pond and I met a nice snake. Well we couldn't complete our trek around the pond because the beavers had dammed it all up. We headed out and again just a beautiful blue sky day. We covered about 11 miles total for the trip. Got back to our car and headed home...of course stopped in Vermont to have a bite for lunch...a nice road side stand and of course we had ice cream. It rained again on the way home in the car. It was a great relaxing weekend. hope one of you will join us next time.

Trail Maintenance By Rob Schechtman

VHC covered sections 1 and 2 of the M&M May 10 for spring trail maintenance. We had



nine members, which deserve a big thanks for picking up trash and clearing blow downs over the 6 miles of trail. The bog bridge is in good shape and the trail is well marked. We had a nice lunch at EB's (compliments of PVHC for working hard) and finished in the early afternoon. We will plan our fall event for a larger project so stay tuned in to give back a little to the trails

Hungry Hiker Corner By Monica Gross

Tasty treats to tempt your taste buds, enjoy

FIRESIDE COFFEE

(2 rounded tsps. per cup boiling water)

2 cups Nestles Quick

2 cups Creamora

1 cup Instant Decaf. coffee (reg if you prefer)

1 tsp. Cinnamon 1/2 tsp. Nutmeg 1 1/2 cups sugar

Combine all ingredients and keep in tightly covered container. For backpacking

you could place small amt in a zip bag or other small light container with enough for a couple of servings.

TRAIL COOKIES

(for those of you who were on the Battenkill trip these are the cookies I brought to the Pot Luck Dinner)

2 cups flour (whole wheat pastry flour is my choice)

2 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp.salt (less or none if you want)

1 tsp vanilla

1 tsp orange essence

2 eggs

2 sticks of butter, softened

1/2 to 3/4 cup of uncooked rolled oats

10 - 12 0z package semi-sweet chocolate chips

1/2 cup pecans chopped fine 1/4 cup walnuts chopped fine

1/2 cup dried unsweetened cranberries

1/2 cup unsweetened coconut

3/4 cup raw sugar

3/4 cup packed brown sugar

Sift dry ingredients set aside. Mix sugar & butter until creamy add eggs one at a time. Add vanilla mix, add orange ess. mix. Gradually add sifted dry ingredients mix well. Add oats, coconut, nuts, cranberries & chocolate chips. Mix together. Drop by spoonfuls onto cookie sheets. Bake in preheated oven 350 degrees for 8 - 10 minutes. Cool, eat, enjoy.

Makes about 3 to 4 dozens depending on size of cookies spoonfuls

It's the Smile

by Marie Babbitt

like to hike because of the peace and the comfort I feel embraced by the trees. Heck I can feel that just driving out into the Berkshires. Some of the other thing I like are the smell while walking thru a section of pine or the flowers on all those trees or bushes I do not know the names of. I enjoy the challenge of scrambling up, through, around and over rocky sections of the trail, even if I am out of breath. But on a recent unofficial hike with some club members I recognized a new joy, the people we meet on the trail. I realized that I have yet to meet a hiker that has a long face and looks unhappy. It's the smile that every hiker (OK 99% and you could count the last 1% if they are headed downhill) of hikers greet us with as we meet them on the trail in addition to the friendliness that (See page for continuation)

we share with each other. I would say that the woods are the cake and people are the frosting on it.

Seven Sister's By Marie Babbitt

Who are the Seven Sister's? And why did they have to construct a hiking trail that does a number on your knees? I don't really think they had much input on the trial itself but I have often wondered what the history was. I finally decided to find out when I stood atop on the tower at Goat's peak and looked across the mountain range. I began counting the peaks and one of my hiking partners that day gently told me that the seven sisters' did not have 7 peaks. Thank goodness because each time I have counted the peaks I came up with a different number. He told me they had to do with the women's colleges in the area. Well the three of us put our noggins together but couldn't come up with the seven. So I investigated it and here is the story.

There are actually 7 hills that are known as the seven sisters. From the Notch Visitors center they are the hills that start after Mt. Hitchcock.

From the Wikipedia website, The **Seven Sisters** are seven liberal arts colleges in the Northeastern United States that are historically women's colleges. They are Barnard College, Bryn Mawr College, Mount Holyoke College, Radcliffe College, Smith College, Vassar College, and Wellesley College. All were founded between 1837 and 1889. Four are in Massachusetts, two are in New York, and one is in Pennsylvania. Radcliffe (which merged with Harvard College) and Vassar (which is now coeducational) are no longer women's colleges.

The colleges were founded to provide educational opportunities to women equal to those available to men and were geared toward women who wanted to study the liberal arts. The colleges also offered professional opportunities to women, hiring many female faculty members and administrators.

In 1837, Mary Lyon founded *Mount Holyoke Female Seminary* (Mount Holyoke College), the "first of the Seven Sisters." Mount Holyoke was a model for a multitude of other women's colleges throughout the country." Two of the seven sister colleges, Vassar College and Wellesley College were patterned after Mount Holyoke. <a>I Is Vassar was the first of the Seven Sisters to be chartered as a college in 1861.

Harwarth, Maline, and DeBras also state that, "the 'Seven Sisters' was the name given to

Barnard, Smith, Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, and Radcliffe, because of their parallel to the Ivy League men's colleges" in 1927.[1][4]

"The name, Seven Sisters, is a reference to the Greek myth of The Pleiades (mythology), the seven daughters of the Titan Atlas and the seanymph Pleione. The daughters were collectively referred to as The Seven Sisters and included, Maia, Electra, Taygete, Alcyone, Celaeno, Sterope, and Merope. In the field of astronomy, a cluster of stars in the constellation Taurus is also referred to as The Pleiades (star cluster) or the Seven Sisters."

There is much more detail on Wikipedia and each of the college websites for a more in depth history.

Notes

- ^ ª ½ º Irene Harwarth; Mindi Maline and Elizabeth DeBra. Women's Colleges in the United States: History, Issues, and Challenges. U.S. Department of Education National Institute on Post-secondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning.
- 2. <u>A "About Mount Holyoke",</u> mountholyoke.edu. Retrieved on <u>2006-09-01</u>.
- <u>A</u> Jennifer L. Crispen. <u>Seven Sisters and a Country Cousin. sbc.edu.
 </u>
- Robert A. McCaughey (Spring 2003). <u>Women and the Academy</u>. Higher Learning in America, History BC4345x. Barnard College.

Local Author Book Release Loop Year: 365 Days on the Trail by John Sheirer

What do you do if you're an amateur adventurer and environmentalist who dreams of hiking the Appalachian Trail or saving the rainforest, but you can't guit your day job or abandon personal commitments? John Sheirer created his own project: From May 17, 2005 to May 16, 2006, he hiked the same trail at the McCann Family Farm in Somers, Connecticut, once a day, every day. He chronicled the year in Loop Year: 365 Days on the Trail, a book composed of 365-word accounts of his hiking project. Along the way. Sheirer discovered that an obsession with hiking and caring for the same New England trail every day can be surprisingly adventurous--ranging from blistering heat. flooding rain, whiteout snowstorms, mornings, dark nights, and everything in between. (Plus there's an unexpected love story and a really cute dog.)

A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Northern Connecticut Land Trust.

"I felt privileged to be brought along on John's journey and recommend this book for anyone." (Angela Ballard, coauthor of A Blistered Kind of Love: One Couple's Trial by Trail)

"Loop Year will draw you in and captivate you with humor, heart, and keen-eyed detail." (Rebecca Lawton, author of Reading Water: Lessons From the River) "John Sheirer is a skilled and thoughtful writer. Readers will be enlarged, enlightened, and entertained." (Jay Atkinson, author of Ice Time: A Tale of Fathers, Sons, and Hometown Heroes) "Loop Year is a gift from the author, full of honest writing." (Diane Payne, author of Burning Tulips)

"I'm thrilled by this wonderful book. It's a great tree trunk of a hiking year." (Suzanne Strempek Shea, author of Songs From a Lead-Lined Room, Shelf Life, and Sundays in America)

"Loop Year is an excellent concept deftly executed--engaging, funny, and thoughtful." (David Miller, author of AWOL on the Appalachian Trail)

For more information, visit www.johnsheirer.com

Climbing Above The Stresses Of Law By JOAN LEE

Sally Roberts sits behind a desk in her profession as a civil litigator. But thanks to her many outdoor hobbies, like hiking and snowshoeing, she often comes back to work refreshed.

"I have been a hiker for 24 years and have hiked on trails all over Connecticut, mostly on my own," said the 51-year-old Roberts, who's an associate in the Hartford office of Brown Paindiris & Scott. "I love my profession, but I think I am a better trial lawyer for taking the opportunity to get outdoors for all sorts of strenuous adventures. It truly is a spiritual renewal." Roberts said that hiking "is not the same as working out, which I do as well, to stay fit for hiking." She also enjoys kayaking and cross-country skiing. I have always loved the outdoors, and am also an (See page 5 for continuation)

athlete, who competed in varsity sports," she said. She was the number-one singles and doubles player for the Radcliffe College tennis team before the school merged with Harvard University. "Then I was number-one doubles with my sister for Harvard," Roberts said. The transition to hiking came naturally, she said. "I stay in shape now for hiking the way I used to train for tennis. A strenuous hike is a great stress reliever," Roberts said. "After a seven-mile hike, the ordinary stresses of the practice of law take on a different perspective. You are also testing your physical limits. Many of the hiking trails are along the edges of steep cliffs, and you can easily topple off the cliffs if you don't watch your footing." A member of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), she will be taking Leadership Training courses so she can become an AMC hike leader, she said. When Roberts is not at work and not involved in one of her outdoor activities, she helps Dr. H. Robert Silverstein, who is medical director at the Board of the Preventive Medicine Center, which is based in Hartford.

Roberts was recently installed as president and chairman of the Board of the Preventive Medicine Center, which provides resources and information on conventional, alternative, and complementary medicines as well as advice on nutrition, including macrobiotics, cooking classes, and lectures. Roberts said the center is dedicated to "promoting a realistic, supportive, holistic approach to health—achieving disease prevention and reversal, where possible, through a combination of innovative, traditional, and alternative methods." Roberts, who has worked with Silverstein for 20 years, said she is a practitioner of the dietary principles and philosophy of the center: "In a nutshell, I 'walk the talk."

Roberts, who calls herself a naturalist, said ever since high school, she has "identified everything I can in the outdoors, from the trees, birds, wildflowers, to animal tracks. I carry a small pad to jot down notes as I am hiking, along with pocket field guides, which are especially useful for identifying animal tracks in the snow," she said. The more interesting tracks she has seen include moose, weasel, and wild turkey, she said. Roberts said she fits in all her activities "by burning the midnight oil and the candle at both ends."

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Photos from a Hike in the White Mountains



UPCOMMING ACTIVITIES

- July 12-13. Tully Lake car camp
- July 18-20. Adirondack Camping Weekend
- Aug. 2. Northstar Canoe
- Sept. 7. Club Picnic
- Sept 19-21. Johns Brook Lodge
- Sept 2008. Return to Africa

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

July Renewals:

Scott Aschenbach Rick Briggs

James Brown & family

Elizabeth Case

Robert Church

Donna Delisle-Mitchell

Allan Fontaine

Elaine Furtak

Tina Garde

Jeanne Kaiser

Marcia Kelly Adrienne Lacev

Stacey Laplante

Norm Plante

Robert and Lisa Schechtman

Sarah Smith

Sue Ziff & family

Tom Schwensfeir

Francesco Tripoli

Ann Marie & Leah Visconti Heather Wyman & Family

Chuck & Fritz Tiernan

August Renewals:

Harry Allen

Meg Eakin

Marie Bienvenue

Connie Fogarty

Gabriela Horvay

Charlotte Lee

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Laura Savard Gail Schoonover

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Please renew early, and renew by mail. (Make checks payable to PVHC) Mail your renewal with your name and any address or phone number changes to:

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club c/o Deb Gebo 81 Roseland Terrace Longmeadow, MA 01106

(Dues are \$25 member, \$40 family, and \$15 for students)

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Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: marie babbitt@hotmail.com or 21-1/2 New Ludlow Rd., Granby, MA 01033



IMPORTANT NOTICES

- Next Club Meetings: Aug 5, 2008, 7pm at FBC Sep 2, 2008, 7pm at **FBC**
- Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: Aug 20, 2007

Annual PVHC Club Picnic Sunday September 7, 2008

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

*** Check out our web page at: http://www.geocities.com/pvhcweb

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com



A publication of the

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club c/o Wilderness Experiences Unlimited, Inc. P.O. Box 265 Southwick, MA 01077

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