Scramble to top of Twin Peaks provides great views

By Kathryn Reed

Summiting several of the well-known peaks in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin can give a hiker the feeling of being on top of the world. Same with Twin Peaks – just without the time commitment or exertion of a Tallac or Freel.

For those who live near this South Shore outdoor area, it's a hike that can be done after work this time of year because there is enough light.



Mount Tallac from Twin Peaks. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Twin Peaks is aptly named because it's two peaks in one. And rumor has it those peaks are named after a particular woman who lived in South Lake Tahoe.

What makes it fun is that it's a playground for different users. The easier of two four-wheel drive routes looks a bit gnarly this year, with a deep rut that doesn't seem like a novice would want to attempt it. In the winter it's a great place to snowshoe. In the summer, it's a great hike.

Reaching the first peak, we scramble up the granite rocks to get the best view. Storm clouds are moving in last Wednesday. It doesn't look like summer. Luckily, they were only threatening and nothing became of them.

Mount Tallac is to the left, but the sun angle makes it difficult to make out the cross. To the right is Lake Tahoe. To Tallac's left is a waterfall in the distance coming out of the mountains – water that isn't usually there. Snow is still visible in the higher elevations.

Behind us is the second peak with the tower on it to warn aircraft. We start on a distinct path toward it, but lose it pretty quickly. Bushwhacking is the norm for us on this hike. No worries about a trickle of blood here and there.

Close to the top Capone, his master and another guy greet us. They have built a hut of sorts they say they are spending the one night in. It looks cold.

From their perch they can see the multi-million dollar planes parked at Lake Tahoe Airport for the celebrity golf tournament.

We don't stay long. The wind is whipping and the light fading.

Getting there:

From the Y in South Lake Tahoe, continue on Lake Tahoe Boulevard. Turn left on Sawmill Road. Park immediately in the lot to the left.

I start off a neighborhood street, but I'm not going to be responsible for cluttering up a residential neighborhood.

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