

Mountain MAGAZINE Rescue



ISSUE 19

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN ENGLAND, WALES & IRELAND

JANUARY 2007

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EDITORIAL

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NEXT ISSUE

Issue 20 - April 2007

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Editorial copy must be supplied as

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Images must be supplied as separate

JPEGS/Photoshop EPS/TIFF (300 dpi)

Advertising artwork must be supplied, **ready prepared** on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

Front page pic

Keswick MRT practising rigging for rescue

ropework on the Mer de Glace.

Alan Prescott rescuing Jocky Sanderson.

Photo: Keswick MRT

Thank You

to everyone who has submitted news, articles and photographs for inclusion in the Mountain Rescue Magazine. If your contribution isn't here, don't worry. Everything is kept on file for future consideration, so please keep up the good work.

Editor's Note

Articles carried in Mountain Rescue Magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the MRC. Further, we do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

JANUARY 2007

For many years – as far back as I can remember – I have enjoyed the mountains, hills, fells, glens and dales of the United Kingdom. I've walked and climbed through foul weather and fine, sometimes in good company, sometimes in bad but always amongst friends. Being investigative by nature, I resolved to learn more about the events that created these mountains and then over time, eroded them into the shapes we know today. 'How can one mountain be older than its neighbour?' 'How can the rock upon which our home is constructed be older than the adjacent limestone escarpment?' These were questions I needed to resolve. So, on a strictly evening-class basis, I attended numerous lectures and joined various field trips. Oddly named these for, even when high in the mountains, my lecture notes clearly stated 'field trip'.

Well, now I understand much of what lies behind the formation and subsequent shaping of many of the mountains we all know. Similarly I can imagine many of the events and can hold them in a sort of chronological sequence in my mind, despite the vast time spans sometimes involved.

In a way this insight also helps me to visualise (but not necessarily understand) human interactions. There can be an upsurge of enthusiasm and effort from which

can emerge a new rescue group. Then weathering and erosion occurs which can hone the individual members into a competent, effective and determined rescue team.

During the creation of mountains, earthquakes inevitably occur, rift valleys develop and seas can submerge land masses. So too, within the 'landmass' of a rescue team, or the 'continent' of rescue as a whole, there will be significant adjustments. Inevitably, rifts divide and changes occur and these, like many of the geological landscape-forming events, can involve long time spans. No rescue team can remain static. Evolution proceeds sometimes volcanically, but more often than not, on a sedimentary timescale.

Thus geology helps me to picture, in tectonic terms, the relationship between Scotland's rescue teams and those in Wales and England. I then feel reassured that, given time, all the various 'land masses' may become individual and integrated components of one 'continent' recognising the common objective and focus on casualty care rather than spotlighting characteristics (and characters) of individual locations – however special these might be.

Peter Bell President

75 years old and going from strength to strength. This will be the position of mountain and cave rescue in Scotland, England and Wales in the very near future. Representatives from Mountain Rescue (England & Wales), the MRC of Scotland and Cave Rescue have deliberated on the significance of this anniversary year and believe that it must be celebrated. But why bother in a year when there would be a conference anyway?

Firstly, it would be remiss not to recognise the work and foresight of the original groups of people who brought organised rescue into being and, in effect, sowed the seeds of all that's developed since 1933.

Secondly, this is a unique opportunity to raise awareness of the true nature of mountain and cave rescue over a wide audience. At a time when the concept of volunteering often amounts to 'an hour now and then when convenient' we need to emphasise the open ended commitment of team members and the skills and training they bring with them. And, thirdly, it's occasion when all those involved in mountain and cave rescue might justifiably step back and view with some pride what they have achieved.

A meeting of people from all three representative bodies has taken place and decisions made to proceed with a number of events. Willing 'volunteers' came forward to be identified with events but there will be a significant amount of work and we still need more people on board to make best use of this opportunity.

The year will begin with a publicity launch at the Outdoors Show in mid-March. The following four weeks will see a number of actions to reinforce the publicity and in April a number of exhibitions at various locations, such as Rheged, will be launched. It is anticipated that a BBC documentary on mountain and cave rescue will be part of this launch. Two 'formal' dinners will be arranged, one at the beginning of the year and the second in November. Manchester will be the venue for one and the other will be held in Scotland, possibly in Glasgow. A caving event for mountain rescue team members will be held in May and we plan two other outdoor events in June and October. A day looking in detail of the history and development will be arranged. The conference is already booked for 5/6/7 September in Stirling.

A great deal of supporting activity will produce a logo for the year, posters and other publicity material, commemorative items to market and local publicity from floral gardens to team events. This is not a comprehensive list but gives an indication of the aims on which we are agreed. There is still an opportunity to throw in new ideas but this must be done quickly. There is clearly a need for help from a wide range of people. If you are prepared to assist in any way at all, please put your hand up sooner rather than later.

Regular updates on all activities will be sent out from early in 2007 – and through the pages of this magazine – as things are confirmed.

David Allan Chairman

MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE

PAGE 3

EQUIPMENT NEWS

Mike Margeson, MRC Equipment Officer, reports... 'Distribution of the present run of the **vacuum mattress** continues and there are still a few available through me. 'In November, Tracey Binks presented the equipment sub committee with an update on her **Solutions for Storing Entonox** project. This was well received and the potential for wider use recognised – for example keeping warm power sources for the AED or other monitoring equipment. A number of teams and area reps were concerned that they made no attempt to keep their Entonox from cooling at all. Anyone interested in the data or wishing to take part in the on-going trails can access the full report and presentation on the equipment area of the MRC web site or in the minutes of the equipment sub committee. Or contact Tracey Binks at tracey.binks@dfmrt. **A National Training Day** will take place at at

Plas y Brenin on Sunday, 20 May. Equipment input will be focused on getting as many different types of stretcher together as possible. 'On the subject of stretchers, there is a small number of **Bell Tangent** stretchers available on the 50/50 funding arrangements via the normal channels. **'PPE/FPE Equipment** checking courses continue to be well received – the most recent national course at Oldham MRT base was full. Our thanks to Phil Beard for the continued high quality of the course – well focused and excellent delivery – and to John Edwards and Oldham MRT for hosting the day. Ray Griffiths, LDSMRA equipment rep, is now planning the first Lakes course from his team base at Patterdale. 'So what's on the horizon? Perhaps the item I am most looking forward to getting my hands on is the further development by Kirk Mauthner of the **540 belay** device. In fact, when I met with Kirk at IKAR the new device was

described as having a lower/hoist function all in one device. This is presently, albeit slowly, working through the system to obtain an EN norm/standard and CE mark. We will, of course, get tests under way as soon as we obtain one.'

WATER & VEHICLES OFFICERS

There have been many excellent applications for the two new posts of Water Officer and Vehicles Officer. A panel drawn from regional reps and executive members will interview potential candidates in early January.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF UK MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE

A meeting to formulate plans for the 75th Anniversary of UK Mountain Rescue was held at Patterdale in December. Various ideas have been mooted for a year of events across the UK, including The Outdoors Show, black tie dinners (both in Scotland and, notably, in Manchester

Casualty Care in Mountain Rescue (2nd edition) – reprinted

I have embarrassing news that there has been a systemic failure in the binding of 'Casualty Care in Mountain Rescue'. Many of you have found this out already – if your book has not fallen apart, you have not used it much! The printers are very apologetic and undertook to entirely reprint the book with a better quality binding at no cost. These are available from me. About 2000 copies have been distributed so the process is going to take some time – I am a one-man band with 4.5 tonnes of books and a small car. Fortunately, only a few books have gone outside mountain rescue. The MRC meeting in November agreed with my proposal to replace all the old books with a better one on request at any time in the next year. Please keep the old book, as I do not want it back. As the content of the book is still useable, it was decided that the better books would be distributed at MRC meetings and from me in Penrith, Cumbria. For books ordered at the UK Conference price of £10, if you wish to have the books delivered to you, I can arrange this but I will need a cheque for the cost of postage. (Remember each book weighs 1.25kg!)

For me, this whole episode has taken the shine off the project but I am thankful for positive comments on the book's contents and the philosophical views expressed about the shortcomings of the binding. Perhaps next time a commercial route would be appropriate. So contact me with your requests and suggestions for collection.

John Ellerton ellerton@enterprise.net

where the seeds of an organised mountain rescue service were first sown), memorabilia and clothing, floral displays and historic exhibitions at National Mountaineering Centres, culminating in the Anniversary Conference, to be held at Stirling University in September. It is hoped team members will want to contribute and celebrate at local and national level to mark this significant anniversary. Anyone wishing to be involved with the planning and organisation of these activities should contact David Allan on dsaulv@hotmail.com

MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM

In April 2007 the IKAR medical group will be meeting in Patterdale, presenting a unique opportunity to hold a symposium which can finish by involving members from the IKAR meeting to make presentations. The symposium is arranged to take place on Saturday 28 April at Charlotte Mason College in Ambleside. A series of presentations from within the UK will occupy the morning and early afternoon to be followed by the IKAR presentations. It is envisaged that there

'Some teams already have the 1:50,000 and 1:10,000 systems provided through the police or county emergency planning but

only one police force had the 1:25000 system. 'Work is continuing in the Lake District with the development of GPS positioning over the radio system which will require the OS data. 'Work is continuing with mapping software companies looking at the provision of suitable computer mapping for teams at minimal cost.'

will be breaks for a meal at lunch time and again in the early evening. The level of presentation is principally aimed at doctors and other health care professionals in mountain and cave rescue but teams will be invited to send qualified casualty care team members as space permits. The following is an outline programme. A detailed programme and booking form will be issued early in the New Year.

- The optimal management of myocardial infarction.
- Problems of prolonged rescue in caves and on the hills.
- Patterns of injury in mountain biking accidents.

- Fractures with poor outcomes.
- Patterns of injury in caving accidents.
- Medical management of the whole scene.
- Injuries in the northern corries.
- Introduction to IKAR medicine. *Dr John Ellerton.*
- Hypovolaemia. *Dr G Suman. Innsbruck.*
- Innovations in analgesia. *Dr O Reister. Air Zermatt.*
- Canadian avalanche footage. *Dr J Boyd. Banff.*
- Impact of safety equipment in avalanche accidents. *Dr H Brugger. Italy.*
- Lessons in avalanche hypothermia. *Dr P Paal. Innsbruck.*
- Innovations in medical

aspects of helicopter rescue. *Dr I Tomasin. Slovenia.*

OTHER SNIPPETS

- Links with ALSAR are to be strengthened. Peter Bell is to be the liaison assisted by Dr Tony Jones.
- John Ellerton has worked long and hard regarding the revision of the Medicines Act which has now been signed off.
- Peter Huff gave a presentation on behalf of Yorkshire Dales Rescue Panel about the ageing population in the teams and the positive action undertaken to recruit younger team members.

Ged Feeny, MRC Statistics Officer is currently researching a new category to cover Passive Responses such as 'advising prime agency about further actions', 'bringing resources to a higher state of alert' and 'waiting by the phone.'

I have been asked to create a variation to the Incident Reporting and Recording Policy. Up to now, an incident was recorded only if members left their homes or place of work. However, if a team reported that they had advised a party over the phone how to get to a place of safety without the need to mobilise the whole team then this was recorded. Team reporting a stand down while en-route have also been recorded as an active response. But where a team was placed on standby for whatever reason, this was not normally recorded. This has not reflected a growing number of instances where teams were asked to contribute to incidents that are outwith such a definition. After proper consultation with MRC (Scotland) colleagues, I propose changing this part of the policy. I will come back to the MR (England & Wales) in May 2007 with some proposals. If anyone wants to contribute to this preparation, please contact me via email.

Terms:-

- Resource – MRT (mountain rescue team), SARDA personnel (registered search dog handlers), non-specialist co-opted to assist, any non-air asset.
- Response – the way a resource acts to a contact from prime emergency service

Initial research suggests that the nature of a response is an attribute of the responding resource, ie. MRT, SARDA personnel, etc. This means that this information relates to the responding team(s) and not to the incident. The effect of this is that regardless of response, the incident can be classified in the present system without need for change.

There appears to be three levels of response. These are:-

1. Tasked and deployed

This will be the standard response level we have been used to up to the present. The MRT has been requested and agreed to deal with an incident, they are deployed to the hill and complete the task. This might be in conjunction with other MRTs or agencies.

2. Tasked, not deployed

This is where the resource is requested to attend with a view to deployment, but for whatever reasons, does not 'do anything'. This state would cover situations like,

- Stand down while responding
- Stand down while en-route
- Stand down prior to deployment
- Action taken involved giving advice to incident subject with a view to resolving the issue. eg. taking the person down over the phone to a place of safety

3. Alerted, not tasked

The team have been contacted about an incident but a response was not requested.

- General advice was being sought reference this incident
- Requested to bring team to a heightened state of readiness eg. placed at 'standby'
- Team assembled at base to await definitive tasking that subsequently did not materialise

This is still a work in progress but I would welcome any feedback from readers.

Ged Feeny MRC Statistics Officer



PS. You've seen the cartoons, sent the Christmas cards... now buy the book! **'So You Want To Join Mountain Rescue?'** by David Allan & Judy Whiteside is published by Hayloft – a snip at £14.95! www.hayloft.org.uk

DIARY DATES FOR 2007

MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM

Places: 30
Date: Saturday 15 April
Location: Charlotte Mason College, Ambleside
Contact: Peter Smith
01706 852335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY

Places: 24
Date: Spring
Location: South Wales
Contact: Richard Terrell
07971 191942
richard@terrell.orangehome.co.uk

MR (ENGLAND & WALES) MEETING

Places: 60
Date: Saturday 19 May
Location: Plas y Brenin
Contact: Peter Smith
01706 852335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

Places: 60 (all welcome)
Date: Sunday 20 May
Location: Plas y Brenin
Contact: Peter Smith as above

PARTY LEADER COURSE

Places: 30
Date: Weekend July
Location: Rishworth
Contact: Mike Marsh
01204 696383
mjm@boltonmrt.org.uk

SEARCH FIELD SKILLS

Places: 30
Date: Friday 31 August to Sunday 2 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones
01248 716971
3 Maes Tyddyn To, Menai Bridge LL59 5BG

SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

Places: 40
Date: Monday 3 to Friday 7 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones as above.

SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT REFRESHER

Places: 30
Date: Saturday 8 to 9 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones as above.

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY

Places: 24
Date: Autumn
Location: Oldham
Contact: John Edwards
01457 870734
jmemr@ismail.net

MR (ENGLAND & WALES) MEETING

Places: 50
Date: Saturday 17 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ
Contact: Peter Smith as above

TEAM LEADERS MEETING

Places: 50
Date: Saturday 1 December
Location: Lancs Police HQ
Contact: Peter Smith. As above.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE AMBULANCE REGULATIONS

Peter Howells writes, 'For five years I have been the correspondent to the Department of Transport (DfT). They and the various agencies have provided a wealth of information relating to the use of vehicles by mountain rescue. The first contact concerned changes to the blue light regulations and led to a formal request for mountain rescue to be included in the regulations. 'The response was surprising. It stated that, as we register vehicles as ambulances, which have certain statutory exemptions, if we had a separate mountain rescue category we would lose these exemptions. 'Their clear advice is that mountain rescue vehicles should be registered as an ambulance. 'For the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations (Blue Lights) and Construction and Use (Audible Warning Devices), if you rely on the vehicle being used for an ambulance purpose (ie. the vehicle is not registered as an ambulance, then if any question was raised over the use of the vehicle, use of blue lights and audible warning devices or claiming any of the statutory exemptions, you would have to prove first, that the vehicle was being used for an ambulance purpose. 'This has not been defined

and the appeal court cases both relate to a private vehicle and were not really helpful in giving a lead for mountain rescue.' Peter has prepared a comprehensive fact sheet containing the various legal requirements for an ambulance vehicle. Teams are advised they should consider these at the design and specification stage – they are not onerous but need to be complied with to meet the law and, more importantly, maximise use of funding. If you intend to register a vehicle as a Private Light Good (PLG) (ie. you pay standard Road Fund Licence) or any other category, you will NOT be able to obtain VAT exemption. And, as the vehicle is not an ambulance, you will not be able to claim such privileges as exemptions from speed limits and ability to treat red traffic lights as Give Way signs, and certain road sign exemptions which are restricted to vehicles used for 'Fire, police and ambulance purposes'. The specific advice from the DfT is to make all mountain rescue vehicles an ambulance. In the past, members have raised 'local agreement for operating in grey areas when referring to MR vehicles and blues and twos. 'Please be assured,' notes Peter, 'that the Department of Transport

Terry Wyatt

I was extremely privileged to know Terry and extremely saddened when he passed away on 4 October 2006 at the age of 74. Whenever we met he would enquire about recent trips to the mountains. This would lead on to reminisces about his own trips for he was a strong walker, capable of long distances, and a competent climber with many worthy routes to his credit. Equally, he was just as skilled in sailing and skiing. He was always chatty, cheerful and optimistic for the future. These wonderful characteristics concealed the considerable suffering and inconvenience caused by a recurring medical condition. They also hid his regret that the strenuous sporting activities that he loved were things of the past. He gained great pleasure and satisfaction in creating certificates that recorded the achievements of others involved in mountain rescue. How ironic, therefore, that when others wanted to recognise Terry for his contributions he was too ill to attend the presentation ceremony at the UK MR Conference. He died before alternative arrangements could be made.

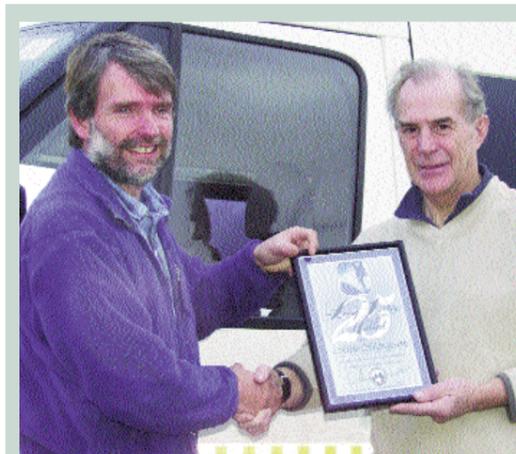
A huge crowd, including many members of Kinder MRT, attended his cremation at Stockport and the ensuing gathering in the Pack Horse Inn at Mellor. A few weeks later, at the MR meeting in Hutton, President Peter Bell made the posthumous presentation of Terry's certificate to Nicky Thomas (daughter) and Jonathan Wyatt (son) and read out the citation: 'Many people have helped and supported the Council of Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) in very tangible ways. Their contributions, whether financial or otherwise are vital to the organisation. Those contributions that involve a person's time are particularly valued. A precedent has been set to recognise such valued contributions. One person who has contributed his time selflessly over thirty five years is Terry Wyatt. In Terry's case this has often been in the most difficult of personal circumstances.'

Terry joined mountain rescue in the Peak District in 1970. He was a fully active member for many years but has been blighted with medical problems since suffering an accident in the line of duty for mountain rescue. Terry however has maintained an interest in mountain rescue and continued to support the organisation with his artistic skills in particular. In the 1980s he was the Hon Editor of the MRC handbook for over five years.

For more than thirty years Terry has designed and produced certificates for recipients of the Distinguished Service Award and the Long Service Award. He does this cheerfully and professionally without any thought of personal recognition. He sees his contribution as a way of staying in touch. A recent recipient of the Distinguished Service Award believes that the quality of the certificate adds to the honour of the award. This enhances the status of mountain rescue in the eyes of anyone who has the pleasure of seeing the certificates.'

Peter Smith

has been very helpful in the provision of information. In complying with the requirements there is no need for members to think they are operating with local agreements or operating in grey areas of the law.' The document is divided into three sections – VAT; Vehicle Excise Duty (Ambulance Classification); and Blue Lights, Red Lights, Two Tone Horns, Bells, Gongs and Sirens. For further information, and to obtain the fact sheet, contact Peter Howells on plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk



MIKE MARGESON – 25 YEARS

It is difficult to believe 25 years have passed since Mike first joined the ranks of Furness MRT. He immediately brought to the team a wealth of mountaineering experience as a qualified mountaineering instructor in addition to a wide ranging personal climbing portfolio. He had also accumulated a significant amount of rescue experience during the course of his activities. It was not surprising that he rose to the role of team leader and has continued in that position in the new Duddon & Furness team following amalgamation with the Millom team.

Over and above this he has made a massive contribution to mountain rescue at national level. His work in developing equipment, such as the vacuum mattress is well known, but he has also been a great representative for mountain rescue across a number of fields of which the BMC, the MLTB and IKAR stand out. He has not merely completed 25 years but has contributed 25 years of intense and important work. We look forward to an encore.

David Allan

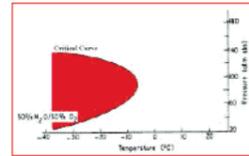
EQUIPMENT EYE

AN ENTONOX WARMING SYSTEM

Tracey Binks & Mick Leverton Duddon & Furness MRT

Entonox (or Nitronox) consists of a 50:50 mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen. It is essential the mixture remains in a homogenous state at all times during administration. If liquid nitrous oxide were allowed to condense inside the cylinder, then an oxygen rich mixture would be withdrawn initially until that is used up then a nitrous oxide rich mixture would be inspired¹. A concentration of about 70% will cause unconsciousness. And at 90% the mixture contains insufficient oxygen to support normal respiration.

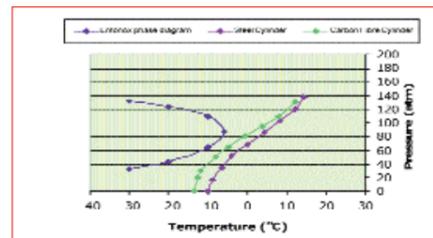
The temperature/pressure diagram for a 50:50 mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen shows the conditions required to cause condensation of



nitrous oxide. At all points in the red shaded area liquid nitrous oxide will be present in the cylinder.

If a cylinder containing 115 bar at 20°C is cooled by lowering the external temperature, then separation occurs when the temperature reaches -5.5°C. One might then assume that provided the cylinder is above -5.5°C before use, then separation will not occur. However, when a compressed gas is allowed to expand through a restriction in such a way that no heat is absorbed from the surroundings a cooling effect occurs. This is called the Joule-Thompson (or Joule-Kelvin) effect and is utilised in standard industrial processes to liquefy gases.

No information was available to determine what effect this could have on the use of Entonox cylinders in MR, hence an experimental investigation was carried out. The experimentally determined temperature/pressure diagrams for Entonox release from steel and carbon fibre cylinders are shown (below) along with the phase diagram for Entonox. Heat absorption was minimised during the tests by use of insulation. Since the condition of neither cylinder enters the

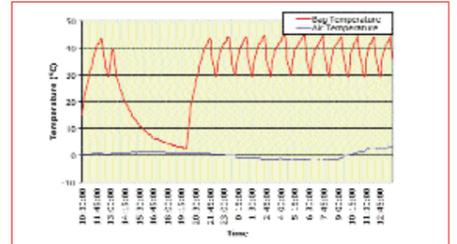


region to the left of the Entonox 'critical curve' it is concluded that with a start temperature³ of approximately 10°C then no condensation of nitrous oxide within the cylinder can occur even when no significant external warming is possible during use (ie. on a cold hillside). The situation for

the 200 bar lightweight cylinders, that have recently become available, is considered to be more demanding. Since these cylinders contain more gas, a greater cooling effect will occur during use. With a start temperature of 10°C and no heat transfer inwards during use it is predicted that condensation of nitrous oxide will occur. Therefore either a higher starting temperature (~20 to 25°C) or greater reliance on heat transfer inwards during use is required. Further information is being sought at present investigation into possible warming solutions for Entonox led to contact with Inditherm PLC, a company manufacturing a flexible, carbon based conductive polymeric heating material. The main advantages of the material are that it gives a uniform heat output (no hot or cold spots), is flexible so can be moulded to any shape and is lightweight. The material is used in a huge variety of applications including industrial process heating, football pitch heating, patient warming in hospitals and even boxes to keep pizzas warm as they are being delivered. Being specialists in custom solutions they were in an ideal position to design and manufacture an Entonox bag that would enable the temperature of the cylinder to be kept within a specific temperature range.

After initial discussions a first prototype bag was manufactured. The bag was designed to be stored within the vehicle with a power supply connected via a plug-in connection on the outside of the vehicle, similar to a vehicle trickle charger. Further development of this would allow switching to the auxiliary battery once the vehicle leaves base so that the cylinder is warmed during transit. In addition, the use of a small battery to power the heating system whilst on the hill is also a consideration that will be investigated.

Temperature stability tests were carried out throughout the winter of 2005/2006 using both steel and carbon fibre cylinders. The graph (above right) shows the bag temperature when the external air temperature was of the order of 0°C⁴. When the power to the bag was switched off it took approximately 160 minutes for the system to cool to 10°C. From the considerable number of tests that were carried out it was possible to conclude that the Inditherm system was capable of keeping an Entonox cylinder warm even when the outside temperature was low



and that the bag would keep a cylinder warm for 1 to 2 hours after the power had been switched off.

The next step was to develop a bag which was more mountain rescue proof. At the same time, minor modifications to the heating system were then made. The operating temperature of the bag was reduced slightly (to 30 ± 5°C) to correspond to the cylinder supplier's current advice and a thermal fuse was added to provide over-temperature protection. The heating system was also enclosed within a pouch to give greater protection.

The new prototype bag was manufactured by Aiguille Alpine. It was designed around the Medical Gas Solutions 'C2N' type carbon fibre cylinders and allows the Inditherm pad to be easily installed and removed should replacement ever be necessary. Tests on this bag are currently being carried out.

Future work will include the following:

- Investigation of battery packs for use on the hill
- Development of a bag for BOC 'CD' type carbon fibre cylinders
- Further investigation into storage temperature requirements for 200 bar Entonox cylinders.

For further information contact Tracey Binks tracey.binks@dfmrt.org.uk or Dr Mick Leverton mick.leverton@dfmrt.org.uk

1. Bracken AB, Broughton GB and Hill DW, 'Equilibria for Mixtures of Oxygen with Nitrous Oxide and Carbon Dioxide and their relevance to the Storage of N₂O/O₂ Cylinders for Use in Analgesia', J Phys D Appl. Phys (1970) 3:1747-58.
2. A full cylinder contains 137 bar at 20°C and if this is cooled then condensation will take place at -7°C.
3. That is the temperature of the cylinder when the casualty first starts breathing the gas.
4. The actual cylinder temperature was monitored throughout these tests, however, the battery on the data logger failed during this particular test. The actual cylinder temperature was generally slightly lower than the bag temperature.

Mountain Rescue and Victorinox

Mountain Rescue and Victorinox, makers of the Swiss Army Knife, have formed a partnership to promote how essential it is for people to be properly equipped when venturing into the great outdoors. From January 2007, Victorinox stockists across the UK will be displaying a range of promotional materials to promote the campaign strapline – 'Essential Kit Mountain Rescue. Victorinox' – and encourage outdoor enthusiasts that they shouldn't explore the outdoors without a pocket tool, in case of unexpected emergency situations. The materials aim to create high visibility and encourage call to action to the Mountain Rescue website. All point of sale material will carry the England & Wales and Scotland Mountain Rescue web addresses. In addition to this partnership, staff at Victorinox UK distributors Burton McCall have raised over £3000 for Mountain Rescue by undertaking the Three Peaks Challenge. Derbyshire MRT will accept the cheque on behalf of Mountain Rescue early in 2007.

To find your nearest Victorinox stockist call 0116 234 4644.

ESSENTIAL KIT MOUNTAIN RESCUE



ADVERTORIAL

Water on the Move aim to provide the preferred packaging option to meet the substantial and growing demand for high quality drinking water to the public throughout the UK in an innovative, easy to use form, offering transportation and recycling efficiencies over and above the present plastic bottle alternative. Through H2GO we have pioneered a revolution in packaging for the provision of easily portable, high quality drinking water both as a stylish and attractive accessory and practical benefit to health in the leisure and working environments. Water can be supplied in 500ml PET bottles printed with your own logo to use during promotional or fundraising events and there's even a choice of cap colours.

By the summer of 2008, we shall be packaging local water for local markets, enhancing our policy of low energy and low waste through a minimal distribution and disposal philosophy for a reduced carbon emission and disposal impact. Water Direct provides wholesome drinking water in any form from bottles to dedicated bulk tankers, sourced from high quality aquifers. Microbiological and chemical testing over many years demonstrates the water complies with the European drinking water directive at all times – a standard that is stricter than the current bottled water regulations in force. For further information, contact **Water on the Move** on **0845 345 1724**. **8-26 Earls Colne Business Park, Earls Colne, Colchester, Essex CO6 2NS**



LAKE DISTRICT

Richard Warren (Secretary, LDSAMRA) writes... 'The region has been very busy during the late summer with significant numbers of incidents across the Lake District. In the last issue we reported on the poster campaign which was designed to improve public awareness of mountain rescue and to ensure that, when the teams services were required, the '999' system would help the casualty with a fast and effective response. The reality has been somewhat different with at least two off-road incidents, where mountain rescue was required and requested, being initially referred to the ambulance service. In one incident, where the casualty had suffered a significant head injury, the informant was asked to contact the mountain rescue service through the yellow pages. Regardless of these setbacks, the campaign will continue throughout the winter and into next year. It should be noted we have good liaison and working arrangements set up with the various statutory bodies and these, along with regular face to face communication, incident review and investigation, are delivering improvements to the service.'

'One bonus for the region and mountain rescue generally was a call in September from the editor of a new magazine called 'Membership Today'. Although based in London, the editor had heard about the Lake District poster campaign, seen a copy of the poster and thought the story would make a good article for their launch issue. I recently received two complimentary copies in the post and there it was, on page 34, 'Lakes rescue service raises profile through ads'. The magazine has a wide distribution and is designed to appeal to anyone who is part of an 'organisation' - www.membershiptoday.co.uk. So the message is slowly but surely getting around the UK. I am also aware of other regions considering something similar.'

KESWICK MRT TRAINING PROGRAMME

'In November, two further members of **Keswick MRT** attended and successfully completed a five day EMT medical training course based at Glenmore Lodge.



MARK HODGSON, TEAM LEADER, KESWICK MRT GETS TO GRIPS WITH STEEP ICE TOPPING OUT ON A SERAC ON THE MER DE GLACE

'And earlier in the month, sixteen members of the team crammed into a minibus with all their gear and set off in search of snow and ice. Wishful thinking for an early winter you might think? Actually, being prepared for whatever this year might throw at us was the plan, so off they went (via Liverpool Airport) to find the nearest and cheapest, guaranteed snow and ice available - in Chamonix. Over four full days they worked in cold but otherwise sunny conditions. A very useful and timely refresher was had by all, covering essential personal safety, using a variety of anchors (including axes, ice screws, snow stakes, deadmen, even rucksacks) and carrying out countless simulated rescues and multi-pitch lowers. Judging by the photos you get the impression that they might have enjoyed it, too! There's another course of winter skills training planned for Scotland in February, too. The result is that well over half the team will receive winter training again this year.'

TV DOCUMENTARY

'The **Cave Rescue Organisation** and Lake District teams have been approached by a film company to explore the possibility of a full documentary series. Five of the LDSAMRA teams have agreed to participate in the project, along with one of the cave rescue teams. Discussions are

at an early stage and the proposal is currently been assessed by the BBC. Current indications are promising and, if approved, will require filming to commence in February 2007 through to September 2007. The series would not be shown until 2008, which will be particularly beneficial to both mountain and cave rescue as this will coincide with the 75th anniversary of the formation of an organised mountain rescue service in the UK.

'If you have any questions on this article or indeed any of the Lake District articles or statements made then please contact me and I will ensure that you receive a response.'

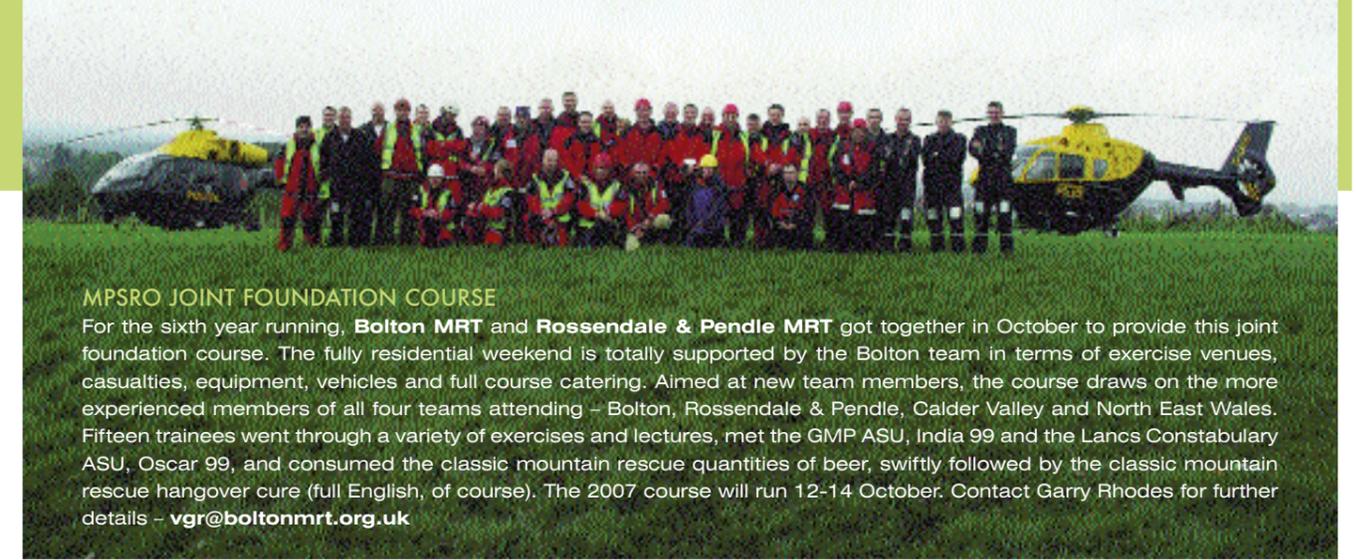
MID PENNINE

TEAM MEMBER INJURED IN IRAQ

Team members of **Bolton MRT** heard in November that their former colleague and friend, Mike Thomason had been injured by a rocket attack on his camp in Basra, sustaining a serious injury to his arm. Mike, a former Horwich church minister, has been serving with the British Army in Iraq as a chaplain with the Combat Support Engineer Regiment. He was airlifted into RAF Brize Norton on a Saturday 16 November, and has since been recovering in the UK. Everyone on the team wish him a full recovery.

CALDER GOES MINIATURE

Calder Valley SRT have gone miniature in their bid to raise the profile of mountain rescue services in the UK. The model manufacturer Corgi approached the team in the spring of this year after they learnt of the role of mountain rescue in



MPSRO JOINT FOUNDATION COURSE

For the sixth year running, **Bolton MRT** and **Rossendale & Pendle MRT** got together in October to provide this joint foundation course. The fully residential weekend is totally supported by the Bolton team in terms of exercise venues, casualties, equipment, vehicles and full course catering. Aimed at new team members, the course draws on the more experienced members of all four teams attending - Bolton, Rossendale & Pendle, Calder Valley and North East Wales. Fifteen trainees went through a variety of exercises and lectures, met the GMP ASU, India 99 and the Lancs Constabulary ASU, Oscar 99, and consumed the classic mountain rescue quantities of beer, swiftly followed by the classic mountain rescue hangover cure (full English, of course). The 2007 course will run 12-14 October. Contact Garry Rhodes for further details - vgr@boltonmrt.org.uk

the UK and saw images of the teams rescue Land Rover. Corgi launched the model, priced around £28, in November as part of their Specialist Rescue Vehicles range.

Team Leader Mick Smith said, 'We regard it as an honour to have our team vehicle immortalised in this way but, more importantly, I see this as a way of continuing to raise the profile of mountain rescue in general. Corgi have done a great job in capturing the detail of the vehicle.'

BOWLAND OPEN NORTH WING

His Grace, the Duke of Westminster, officially opened Smelt Mill's 'Northern Extension', in the Forest of Bowland, on the 29 August, 2006.

Bowland Pennine MRT has been operating out of this building for over twenty years, during which they have developed the base from a single cottage into a 30-bed outdoor education centre, rescue training facility and incident command centre. Smelt Mill HQ is run by volunteers within the rescue team, delivering talks and outdoor safety courses to groups ranging from scouts, youth service and school groups, through to adult groups from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The aim is to deliver affordable outdoor education into groups using the outdoors for recreation or education, promoting mountain safety and environmental awareness through outdoor activities. Courses include mountain walking, rock climbing, outdoor survival, canoe and kayaking, adventure games and development training, caving, orienteering and 'mountain rescue experience'. The building is equipped with drying room, equipment stores, kitchen, lounge and indoor climbing wall, as well as accommodation for up to thirty people.

For further information on Smelt Mill contact smeltmill@bowlandpenninemrt.org.uk



WHO CARES ENDURES

Bowland MRT are selling 10 x 8 framed copies of this stunning image to raise much needed funds. With a working title 'Who cares, endures', the picture bears the inscription, 'On the 3 March 2006 a blizzard swept across the Pennines resulting in numerous emergency calls from stranded walkers and hikers caught out by the swiftness of the storm. The Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team were scrambled to assist in the guidance, recovery and rescue of twenty seven people in a single afternoon. The selflessness, determination and endurance of mountain rescue volunteers everywhere is depicted in this photograph.'

To order a copy, contact the fundraising officer of the team via their website. www.bowlandpenninemrt.org.uk

NORTH EAST

ALL CHANGE AT CLEVELAND

Sid Bolland, Chairman **Cleveland SRT** writes, 'Earlier this year the team elected a new leader. Carl Faulkner, who has been with the team since 1997, has already shown himself more than adequate for the role. Carl takes over the reins from Pete Garrod who has decided to stand down due to work commitments. Pete had a long and busy career with the team with many years of loyal and dedicated service.'

'Pete came to us from the Teesdale & Weardale team. He moved into the area, joining Cleveland in 1979. He held a number of posts over the years, including committee member, base

manager, training officer, and secretary and was team leader for about eight years. His skill in representing the team to the police and his knack for formulating search plans, in the days when we had long and complicated searches, were second to none. Pete always involved others in the decision making but would always take the ultimate responsibility.

'In 2003, he was awarded the Queen's Golden Medal along with a 25 year award for his services to MRC. It is always a sad loss when someone experienced takes the decision to leave the team, but we wish him well and know he will always be available for any help and advice.'

'Another retirement from Cleveland team was our long standing chairman Dave Little, who has now opened the Austrian branch of CSRT! Dave also filled numerous roles within the team including committee member, team leader, base manager and chairman and was heavily involved with the regional committee and MRC Treasurer for a number of years. Dave's negotiating skills were outstanding. He played a big part in making the Cleveland team the professional and respected organisation it is and, although he now resides in foreign parts, I know he is only a phone call or email away for advice.'

'Over the years, Dave has had many awards including a personal award in 1987, the Queen's Golden Medal and the 25 year award for services to the MRC in 2003, and another for services in 2005. This year, Cleveland invited Dave to accept the position of vice president, which he gladly accepted.'

'We wish him well in his retirement abroad although, every time he returns to these shores he insists on punishing himself by going along to the Riverside stadium to watch Middlesbrough play'.

SOUTH WALES

SARDA SOUTH WALES ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

SARDA (South Wales) held its annual assessment in October, based in the Brecon Beacons, with three SARDA (South Wales) dogs up for assessment. This year was a 'multinational' assessment, with two dogs from SARDA (England), together with four SARDA (England) assessors, and two SARDA (Wales) assessors. Of the five dogs for assessment Ian Bunting and Tyke, together with Calum Stewart and Jenna

WalkingWomen

Women's walking holidays in the Lake District, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Madeira, Alps, Southern Africa & more...



Lots of short breaks in the Lake District too. All grades of walks. All women welcome!

Brochure: 08456 445335
www.walkingwomen.com



MIKE AND CORRIE, CALUM AND JENNA, SIMON AND MERLIN

SOUTH WEST

SEVERN TRENT DONATE LAND ROVER

Severn Trent Water has donated a Land Rover to assist **Severn Area Rescue Association**. The vehicle was formally handed over to SARA Wyre Forest team a few months ago by Keith Hart, Regional Transport Manager. 'Severn Trent Water is happy to support SARA who cover a large operational area from the tidal estuary of the Severn up as far as Shrewsbury and associated waterways. This will be a valuable addition to the equipment that SARA already use and will be in service on every callout.'

were up for upgrade from novice to full search dog. Nicky Lyons and Cavos, Mike Marchant and Corrie, Simon James and Merlin were up for initial qualification to novice search dog. An excellent result was achieved with all five dogs qualifying.

cover a large operational area from the tidal estuary of the Severn up as far as Shrewsbury and associated waterways. This will be a valuable addition to the equipment that SARA already use and will be in service on every callout.'



Since then, it has been fitted with blue lights, roof rack and adjustable worklights round the vehicle and been fitted out as an ambulance by crew members. Whilst Wyre Forest do not have many mountains within their operational area, they frequently get asked to carry out land and river bank searches for missing persons on behalf of West Mercia Constabulary. This vehicle will be used on both land search and water based incidents. In cases of difficult access for the normal ambulances, SARA will be able to utilise the Land Rover in the extraction of casualties.

Kit crit Garmont Tower GTX

Feature-packed 3+season lightweight mixed mountaineering boot

By now we should all have put our summer boots away and dragged out the feet breaking heavy winter boots! Or so it used to be. Over the last few months, I've been able to put a pair of Garmont Tower boots through their paces, not just from a mountain-walking angle but also from a mountain rescue angle.

Garmont is an Italian firm with many years' pedigree. They are now back in the UK market with a new range of high tech and high spec outdoor footwear. The Tower is designed as an all-round mountain boot. It's at home on the rocky paths of the Lakes or the wet high moorland of the Forest of Bowland. It has enough stiffness for crampon work and edging on rock, while maintaining enough flex to allow for day long rescue work. The technology behind the boot is quite complex - its not just two sides of cow sewn together anymore. Garmont use a system called ADD (Anatomically Direct Design) which allows the foot and boot to work together rather than fighting against each other.

It starts by changing the toe box area - more room is given to the big toe allowing the toe to move and naturally adjust to maintain stability. Likewise the lace system is angled in line with the toe joints so flexing with the foot's natural shape. The tongue is half thickened to help prevent it from drifting around the side. The heel padding mirrors the natural shape of the foot to provide comfort and stability. The final touch is the slope on the top edge of the tongue which allows the ankle to be well supported for scrambling while still resisting lateral ankle strains.

On the ground the Tower came straight out of the box and straight on the hill, the fit is close and secure, it has enough flex to allow easy year round mountain walking, but it is technical enough for summer alpine and UK winter routes. On rock and easy crag routes the rubber rand and sole unit gives a true and accurate feel. The secret lies in the fibre glass mid sole, graded to boot size to maintain a constant amount of flex throughout the life of the boot. The boots were comfortable from the first outing, essential as how many of us have time to break boots in?

The Garmont Tower gives excellent support, modern in its fabric construction and waterproof Goretex liner with a huge protective rubber rand. The Tower fits into that new category of 'High performance mountain boot'. The vibram sole finishes off this high tech boot.

Anyone who has ever been involved with a rescue needing a stretcher carry will understand that paths are designed for 1 or 2 people's width, meaning everyone in the stretcher party ends up in the mire on either side of the path. The Tower offers the high level of ankle support needed for stretcher carries where foot placement and path choice don't exist! And having nice dry feet makes a lot of difference, right up to the point when the water comes over the top of your gaiters!

Features:

- * Upper: 1.8 mm Suede/Polyimide
- * Lining: Goretex Sierra
- * Sole: Vibram Nepal
- * Weight: 790 grams (1/2 pr size 8 UK)
- * Applications: Light, fast mixed mountaineering, technical trekking, backpacking, Alpine travel, via ferrata, technical approach, All Around Guide's Mountain Boot.
- * Sizes UK 5-13 inc 1/2 sizes available in women's sizes too!
- * £160
- * Stockist details from DB Outdoor Systems 01539 733842

Alan Woodhead
Bowland Pennine MRT
MPSRO Equipment Officer

Whalley Warm & Dry win Páramo award



Lancashire based outdoor retailers Whalley Warm & Dry have been awarded 'Páramo Premier Retailer of the Year' status for the third year running (Winner 2004, Runner Up 2005 & 2006). The award recognises the high levels of customer service, product range and retailer knowledge in Páramo retail outlets.

Whalley Warm & Dry have the best display and the most extensive range of Páramo in the country with friendly and helpful staff always ready to advise on the right product for your chosen activity.

Páramo is widely recognised for their high quality, high performance, highly breathable waterproof jackets and trousers. Their products are supremely comfortable in a wide range of environmental conditions, a feature which attracts mountain rescue teams, outdoor instructors and guides. As testament to the confidence Páramo has in its products, each garment has a lifetime guarantee, further ensuring ultimate customer satisfaction with every purchase. Excellent reviews in recent gear tests support such views of quality. *Which? Magazine* awarded the Páramo Cascada jacket 'Best Walking Jacket' and *The Great Outdoors* magazine voted the Páramo Cascada trousers 'Best Buy'.

To complement their Páramo range, Whalley Warm & Dry also offer a wide range of popular outdoor brands including Brasher, Tilley, Teva, Merrell, Lowe Alpine, Lafuma, Oxbow, Sealskinz, Buff and Weird Fish and, more recently, Leki walking poles, Smartwool socks and Meindl footwear. They also stock Altberg high quality handmade ladies' and mens' walking boots available in half sizes and five width fittings and this season sees the arrival of technical French brand Millet.

If you are considering equipping your team, Whalley Warm & Dry offer extremely competitive prices on Páramo and can also arrange badging and embroidery. They are currently in the process of sponsoring and supplying Páramo Fuera Smocks to the Rossendale & Pendle team.

For further information please contact Liz or Jon on **01254 822220**.

FIRST RESPONSE...

ROAD SAFETY BILL

The Road Safety Bill received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006 and is now known as the Road Safety Act 2006. At last, the speculation and conjecture with regard to mountain rescue drivers and speeding is over, as Section 19 of the Act makes clear. This section provides a substitution to Section 87 of the Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and states that in order for a speed limit to apply to a vehicle being used for fire, police, ambulance or Serious Organised Crime Agency purposes the driver must have:-

- Satisfactorily completed a course of training in the driving of vehicles at high speed provided in accordance with regulations under the section, or
 - Is driving the vehicle as part of such a course.
- Quite simply, unless the driver of an MR vehicle is trained, or undergoing an approved course of training, they are no longer exempt (if they ever were!!) from observing speed limits. There is still some way to go with regard to what a training course may end up looking like, cost and whether there may be different provisions for different classes of vehicle, persons or circumstances. However, at the moment we have what Her Majesty put her autograph to. I personally believe, for many reasons, that this is a positive move that can only improve the safety of mountain rescue personnel and other road users and further positively improve the image of MR in the community. I understand there will be many and varied views with regard to this issue within the MR world, but the bottom line is... it's the law. Now may be an appropriate time for the MRC, supported by our Honorary Legal Adviser, perhaps through your pages, to make comment from a national perspective, with regard to road user safety and the use of mountain rescue vehicles. *(not necessarily the views of the team)

Barry Robinson
Rossendale & Pendle MRT

THANKS

I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to the Council of Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) for presenting me with their Distinguished Service Award. It has been a privilege and an honour to be involved with the mountain rescue service for more than 30 years. However, to be awarded a DSA for what has been a most rewarding time, being involved with tremendous people and a most worthwhile organisation is very pleasing. To be listed alongside some of the most tremendous people that have been involved with the service is a special privilege. I thank the

president, council and delegates to the 2006 UK conference for making me most welcome and making the presentation a special occasion. Kindest regards

David Little

PSYCHIATRIC ILLNESS

I have just picked up the October magazine and wish to draw to your attention an error in Henry Guly's article on psychiatric illness. For the record, the paragraph on 'sectioning' is incorrect in that doctors cannot detain a patient on their own for either assessment or treatment. In practice, doctors take part in a 'mental health assessment' involving a social worker (ASW) approved under the Mental Health Act 1983. Under the Act, the doctors, or doctor in an emergency situation, make a medical recommendation, while the ASW actually makes the application. The ASW has the responsibility for the coordination of the Mental Health Assessment and the ASW also has the discretion not to make an application if he or she feels that there is an alternative to a hospital admission under 'section'. Mountain rescue teams are likely to find that it would not be practicable for an assessment under the Mental Health Act to be coordinated in a mountain rescue environment. The local Social Services Authority has to be contacted regarding any mental health assessment for compulsory hospital admission.

The most useful powers for mountain rescues are those of the police to detain a person under section 136 of the 1983 Act and for the person to then be taken to a 'place of safety', usually a hospital but possible a police station, where a mental health assessment can take place. This has recently been done by the Wasdale team.

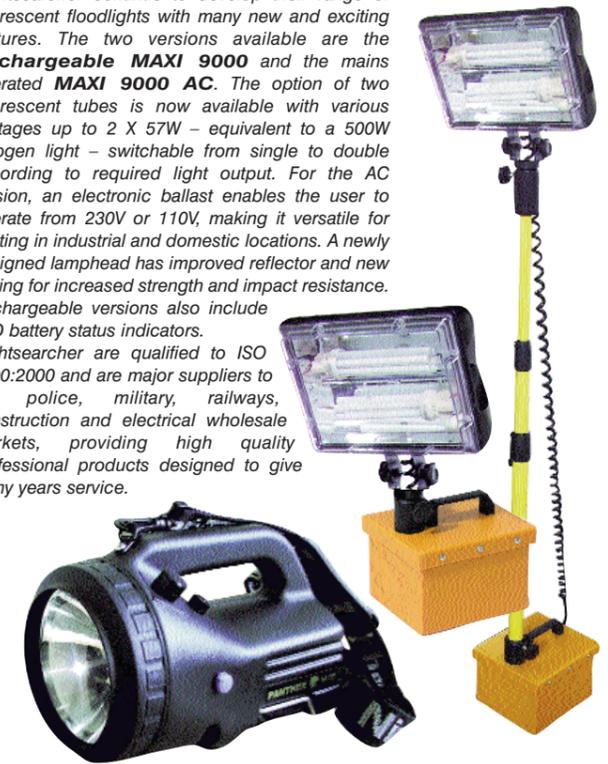
Bob Mayow
Wasdale MRT

Bob is of course, correct in that a doctor cannot section a patient by himself but needs somebody to make an application for this to happen. This is usually an ASW but can be a relative. The ASW is independent and can decline to make an application, though this would be rare. My excuse for not mentioning it was a) brevity (this was not meant to be an article on the Mental Health Act) and b) lack of relevance because, as I said in my article and Bob agrees, in practice in the MR situation, if one needs to invoke the Mental Health Act, the only practical section to use would be section 136.

Dr Henry Guly

Nightsearcher add to range

Nightsearcher continue to develop their range of fluorescent floodlights with many new and exciting features. The two versions available are the **Rechargeable MAXI 9000** and the mains operated **MAXI 9000 AC**. The option of two fluorescent tubes is now available with various wattages up to 2 X 57W - equivalent to a 500W halogen light - switchable from single to double according to required light output. For the AC version, an electronic ballast enables the user to operate from 230V or 110V, making it versatile for lighting in industrial and domestic locations. A newly designed lamphead has improved reflector and new casing for increased strength and impact resistance. Rechargeable versions also include LED battery status indicators. Nightsearcher are qualified to ISO 9000:2000 and are major suppliers to the police, military, railways, construction and electrical wholesale markets, providing high quality professional products designed to give many years service.



The **Panther HID** is an extremely powerful 3.5million candlepower rechargeable searchlight, using the latest technology High Intensity Xenon Discharge Lighting. Developed from the popular Panther HD, it has a powerful 3W Luxeon Star secondary LED light, for lower level lighting and longer operation time, and is powered by problem free, lightweight nickel metal hydride batteries. Constructed in an unbreakable polyethylene case, with toughened lens, carry strap and adjustable stand, the lamp will operate for 1.5 hours on high - 5 on low - beam. A battery charging indicator - charge time is 8 hours. The weight of the unit is substantially less than the Panther HD at 2.3 kg. Other products available include a comprehensive range of rechargeable handlamps, searchlights, headlamps and flashlights.



For more information visit www.nightsearcher.co.uk or contact Tony McDowell antony.m@nightsearcher.co.uk

Subscribe to Mountain Rescue magazine

Interested in mountain rescue but not a team member? Keen to get your hands on your very own copy? Mountain rescue team members in England and Wales receive this fast growing quarterly free of charge courtesy of the MRC, through their teams.

And from January 2007, anyone can subscribe to Mountain Rescue magazine for £20 per year including p&p. That's four issues - January, April, July and October - delivered direct to your door.

Interested? Fill in this form and return, with your cheque for £20 to:- The Editor, 8 Bridgefoot Close, Boothstown, Worsley, Manchester M28 1UG.

Please make cheques payable to Mountain Rescue (England & Wales)'.
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Development Officer for IMRA



Irish Mountain Rescue recently advertised for a development officer, the first full time paid position within mountain rescue. Bill Whitehouse, from British Cave Rescue, represented Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) on the interview panel. According to the job description, the purpose is to 'work with the mountain rescue teams, the IMRA Executive and officers, and other stakeholders for a better and quality service to those in need if help on the mountains of Ireland.' The successful applicant, Paul Whiting, introduces himself...

Well I've been on board for just over a month in my role of Development Officer with the Irish Mountain R e s c u e

Association. From what I understand, this is the first time that a professional staff member has been appointed by a mountain rescue service in England, Wales or Ireland. So it will be of some interest to the wider mountain rescue community to see the benefits that can be gained by full-time support staff over the coming months.

My name is Paul Whiting and I grew up in Melbourne, Australia. As a youth I was introduced to skiing in the Australian Alps by my uncle and I was a boy scout where I fell in love with the outdoors and the Aussie bush.

When I finished high school, I studied computer science and have been working in IT for the past 20 years. This has allowed me to have a varied career and to travel the globe. I've worked in all sorts of organisations including academia, research, government, start-ups and Fortune 500 companies and held many different roles including developer, support engineer, researcher, consultant, and project manager.

Before coming to Ireland in 2002, I lived and worked for five years in Boston, Mass. During this time a number of things happened. I met many expat Irish living in the US (one of which I ended up marrying); I became a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC); and I participated in a number of voluntary roles in grass roots organisations, including being chair of an environmental group and founding secretary of the United States Australian Football League (USAFL).

I think the time I spent with these two voluntary organisations prepared me well for the role of development officer. I've already dealt with similar projects regarding insurance and national conferences in these bodies. As national secretary of a sporting organisation, the teams and clubs were in different stages of development and growth characterised by their location. I can see a direct correlation between the issues football clubs experienced in the US with the issues faced by MR teams in Ireland.

While it may not be immediately obvious, growing a football club and league is similar to growing an MR team and federation of independent teams for mountain rescue. There are similar issues to be addressed – different levels of capabilities and organisation between teams, finding funding, training at a team and national level, public relations and awareness, insurance, organising national activities and, finally, striking a balance between keeping everybody happy and progressing ideas and initiatives forward. All this, while respecting people are participating as volunteers and appreciating the differences that location, culture and ideologies provides.

In July 2002 I moved to Ireland to get married and my wife and I settled in Clonakilty in West Cork. Because of the Irish I'd met in Boston, I was aware that hillwalking was quite popular, so we promptly joined the Clonakilty Walking Club. Through attending club events and hillwalking festivals, I've been fortunate to walk in many different counties and communities across Ireland. Since coming to Ireland, I've also taken the opportunity to study and complete a Diploma in Applied Project Management at University College Cork in 2005.

I believe my unique blend of personal and professional experience brings a lot to the role of development officer for IMRA. Over the next few months I look forward to meeting the twelve teams spread across Ireland and working with the Executive Committee to fulfil the development goals the teams have identified.

Since coming on board, I've mainly been involved in setting up the office – ordering a laptop, mobile phone and getting a phone line installed. I've written three articles similar in nature to this piece as a way of introducing myself to different organisations. I've also had a meeting with the Mountaineering Council of Ireland (MCI) who are providing the administrative support of my employment for IMRA. I've begun making contact with the team leaders of the twelve teams to get familiar with the teams, their activities and to look at when I can make a visit to the teams.

Some of the activities I've been involved in since coming on board include the engagement and finding of an insurance expert to research insurance for the IMRA teams and the upcoming National Annual General Meeting (AGM) of IMRA

planned for the weekend of 20–21 January 2007 and hosted by the South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (SEMRA).

Joe Ganly of Ganly International was appointed as an independent insurance broker to conduct an insurance review on behalf of IMRA. Over a number of months, he fielded questions from the various teams comparing their existing policies against his proposal. His final report was released on 25 October, 2006. The idea being that all IMRA members would be covered by the policy Joe was proposing, but ultimately it would be the decision of each team whether to go with the proposed IMRA policy or to negotiate/source their own policy. Joe has kindly agreed to speak at the upcoming National AGM in January to brief IMRA members on his findings.

A great programme has been put together for the AGM in the Glen of Aherlow, Co. Tipperary including a number of break-out sessions. On Saturday, 20 January there will be four sessions before the social programme begins. The first session will concentrate on 'Searches' with presentations by the An Garda Síochána (the Irish Police Force), the Irish Coastguard and case studies from two of our more experienced search teams – Kerry and Dublin/Wicklow. The second session will focus on 'Team Officer Meetings' with the choice of four break-out sessions. The third session is Joe Ganly's talk on 'Insuring the Volunteer'. The fourth session will be a choice between two workshops 'GPS mapping of real-time search parties' and 'How to make a successful application for a capital grant'. On Sunday morning, the official AGM will take place.

Between now and the AGM, I'll be working on making contact with the remaining IMRA teams; putting together a newsletter/status report for distribution to all IMRA members; cataloguing the documents on the IMRA website to get clarity on what resources we already have available and to identify and make recommendations as to what resource documents are needed. Cataloguing documents will also be the first step in working towards a Code of Best Practice.

If you would like to be in contact over the coming months my contact details are as follows. Email imra.dev.officer@gmail.com Mobile +353-87-259-0290 Office +353-23-59822

Sole Men

Back in 1981 Feet First developed a technique for repairing rock climbing boots, initially for a friend of one the company's founding members. Since then, we're said to have saved 'more soles than Billy Graham' and gone from strength to strength, repairing all types of outdoor performance footwear. Originally situated in Sheffield, now based in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, Feet First's reputation has become second to none for service and quality of repairs. This year has seen Lowa join a long list of footwear manufacturers

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READING MATTERS

SNOW

BY ROBERT BOLOGNESI

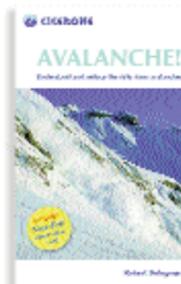


This practical guide, aimed at walkers, climbers and snowsport enthusiasts who want to improve their knowledge of snow and avalanche release, is equally suitable for snow professionals, guides, mountaineering and snowsport instructors, and ski patrollers. It describes the formation and evolution of snow, showing practical methods for examining and analysing snow cover, and illustrates how to identify the many forms which snow may take and assess avalanche risk more precisely and reliably. It also includes a system of snow observation and handy snow crystal card for identifying crystals in the snow layer.

Snow. Understanding, Testing & Interpreting Snow Conditions to Make Better Avalanche Predictions by Robert Bolgnesi
ISBN (10): 1 85284 474 4
ISBN (13): 978 1 85284 474 5
Published January 2007. Cicerone. 15x10cm. 64pp. Full colour. Paperback/PVC cover.

AVALANCHE

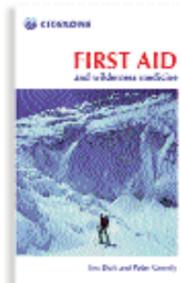
BY ROBERT BOLOGNESI



Is it true avalanches are unpredictable? No one can claim to predict every avalanche, and some are particularly baffling, even for the most experienced. This guide provides a wider understanding, based on objective data and the accounts of avalanche witnesses and survivors. It explains some of the indications which enable a local assessment of avalanche hazard, suggests pitfalls to be avoided and some rules for safer travel on the mountains. *Avalanche. Understand and Reduce the Risks from Avalanches* by Robert Bolgnesi
ISBN (10): 1 85284 474 6
ISBN (13): 978 1 85284 473 8. Published November 2006. Cicerone. 15x10cm. 112pp. Full colour. Paperback/PVC cover.

FIRST AID & WILDERNESS MEDICINE

BY DR JIM DUFF WITH DR PETER GORMLY



This long-established guide to first aid in the wild sets out clearly the protocols and procedures to follow including preparation of first aid kits; good preventative practice, dealing with life-threatening emergencies; specific injuries, such as head injuries, burns, broken bones, sprains; and problems associated with location, such as cold or hot weather, altitude, dehydration, food poisoning and digestive disorders, infectious diseases, bites and stings, rashes and respiratory problems – all clearly referenced. Written by doctors with major outdoor experience, this is an invaluable point of reference for all who travel and take part in outdoor, wilderness and mountain activities. *First Aid & Wilderness Medicine* by Dr Jim Duff with Dr Pete Gormly
ISBN (10): 1 85284 500 7
ISBN (13): 978 1 85284 500 1. Published January 2007. Cicerone. 15x10cm. 192pp. Paperback/PVC cover.

NAVIGATION

BY PETE HAWKINS



Owning a compass isn't everything. Knowing how and when to use it is! This practical guide will help you get the most out of your map and give you the key skills to using your compass. Pete Hawkins is a qualified mountain leader, freelance journalist and the author of 'Map and Compass' published by Cicerone. He writes the monthly navigation column for a leading leading walking magazine. *Navigation. Using Your Map & Compass* by Pete Hawkins
ISBN (10): 1 85284 490 6
ISBN (13): 978 1 85284 490 5. Published January 2007. Cicerone. 15x10cm. 128pp. Full colour. Paperback/PVC cover.

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IN MY VIEW

RIGGING FOR RESCUE ELITIST???

Mike Margeson MRC Equipment Officer

Well I've got your attention now! At the Lancaster conference, Jonathan Hart presented a thought provoking session on rope rescue, in particular some of the specific problems and issues encountered with the nature and need for very long rope rescues on Ben Nevis. Jonathan illustrated the need for single rope rescues involving improvisation and necessitating a high level of mountaineering experience and judgement. Most interestingly he also went on to express his concerns that Rigging for Rescue techniques and learning complicated two-rope systems diminished rescuers real mountaineering experience and particularly the ability to improvise.

During the next days and weeks my mind was turning these comments over, not least because along with Bill Batson I have been (and still am) one of the strongest advocates of the Rigging for Rescue methodologies. Following on from general discussions, I began to contact a number of folk in MR whose opinions I really respect, for a chat. It would appear that an interpretation of some of Jonathan's arguments is of a political nature - that some individuals have used Rigging for Rescue as a power tool within

Rigging for Rescue programmes as widely as possible. Perhaps more importantly though, I believe Jonathan's worries about mountaineering skills, improvisation and, most importantly, judgement to be unfounded. Why do I think this?

The following is a direct quote from the Rigging for Rescue course programme and its philosophy.

'The emphasis is on encouraging participants to become knowledgeable in the principles and concepts of rigging techniques rather than just having them learn by rote. Knowledge provides ability, practice provides proficiency, and from these, together with experience, comes judgement.'

I am still sure that the Rigging for Rescue philosophy can be misunderstood. The key point is that while there are certain



their own circle or team to their own gain. I guess it's the old adage of knowledge being power!

Well I hope that this is not really the case because it is, of course, completely the opposite of the objective of those of us who have worked so hard to disseminate the concepts behind the

systems favoured and particular equipment used, more importantly it is about the rescuer having the knowledge and skills to make the judgements and use the appropriate skills in their tools box. A number of teams - Keswick, Ogwen and my own Duddon and Furness - have adopted various



principles and methods from the Rigging for Rescue programmes.

Also key to the Rigging for Rescue Philosophy, almost akin to that of a sociologist, is the importance of asking the questions, WHO says so, WHY do they say so, and have they tested their system and checked that the back up does work by actually failing a rope.

Do you have any critical points that the whole system relies on? It is crucial to ask yourself searching questions of what you do, how you do it, and when did you last sit down as a team and review operational procedures?

I understand totally the need for speed and a minimal amount of equipment in the type of situations that Jonathan was describing on Ben Nevis. However, I can not agree that the teaching and real knowledge learned on the Rigging for Rescue programme is going to do anything other than better equip the rescuer to make to make sound judgements which might include improvising as rescue is always a dynamic environment.

I hope this article provokes some debate and discussion, as I can certainly not accept that the Rigging for Rescue programme is elitist.

Emergency Services Show 2006

19-20 October 2006 saw the UK's first Emergency Services Show in the heart of Westminster.

The exhibition was officially opened by Danny Biddle, a survivor of the 7 July London bombings who suffered terrible injuries, including the loss of both legs and an eye. In the company of senior personnel from the London Fire Brigade, the

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the Metropolitan Police, Danny praised the work of the emergency services and paid tribute to the outstanding courage of so many involved in the response to last year's attack on London.

The aim of the Emergency Services Show was to provide a unique opportunity for visitors, exhibitors and speakers to source new products, network, share

information and build relationships crucial to successful co-responding in any emergency. David Brown, event organiser, said, 'We were always confident the timing was right for this type of multi-agency event and this is confirmed by the enthusiastic response. We are delighted there seems to be an assumption from all involved that this should become an annual event.'

Mountain Rescue personnel (both England & Wales and Scotland) attended the show in an effort to raise public and emergency service awareness of the service we offer. By all accounts this was a great event - with many new contacts made and existing relationships strengthened - and, alongside our presence at the Outdoors Show, should go a long way to raising our profile.

Nick Owen, team leader of Langdale Ambleside MRT describes three call outs which to him were all personal firsts. A different emotion dominates each one.

Firstly was the first callout I attended as a member of LAMRT. It was August 1992 and a man had collapsed on Crinkle Crags, having suffered a heart attack. Then team leader, Stewart Hulse had called a helicopter, and the quickest way up was to wait for it. An agonising 35-minute wait ensued when the overwhelming feeling was one of enormous frustration. As a relative novice there was obviously very little that I was going to contribute, but to have to stand and watch all that skill and equipment waiting... Eventually the helicopter arrived and whisked the doctor and a couple of experienced team members up. Unfortunately, the man had died and there was nothing to be done but bring his body down. I went home with a feeling that if this was a regular occurrence, I doubted I could cope. Fortunately this type of incident proved to be rare and I carried on.

The second 'first' was the first time I arrived first at a casualty. Two young lads had been climbing a semi-frozen Dungeon Ghyll on New Years Day 1993. The ice broke off and the leader fell 65ft or so onto his second, followed by most of the ice and a quantity of rock. Both of them ended up in the freezing Ghyll with multiple injuries, and I got there first! Obviously the two lads needed immediate help, and the other people in the area who had gone to their aid were expecting something similar, and all I could think of was Oh s**t! What a mess! What now?! PANIC... no... ABC... Airway, Breathing, Circulation. No! Personal safety first, then ABC. They're groaning, that's the A and B sorted more or less (you can't groan if you can't breathe), what about the C? Then someone else arrived, and then another and more. Suddenly I was able to step back and let the far more experienced team members take over. I stood back and watched them go

to work. I'm not sure I contributed anything useful to the rescue. They worked with a confidence I doubted I would ever share. Well-rehearsed sequences of checks and treatment were carried out. I don't think anyone noticed the fact that I was still shaking an hour later!

The third 'first' was January 1995. The team was well and truly committed to helping the ambulance service deal with the heavy snowfall. A call came from the police alerting us to the fact that a couple had not returned from a walk round the Fairfield Horseshoe! It was now dark and had been snowing heavily for several hours. I had not long been appointed as a deputy team leader. Stewart Hulse was out in the snow helping the ambulance service, as was the other more experienced deputy. The responsibility of organising the search fell to me. My first one! It wasn't a particularly lengthy or complicated search, and they were found fairly quickly on Nab Scar, having taken shelter behind a wall.

They were poorly equipped and had started singing hymns, convinced that they weren't going to make it. They would have died of hypothermia within a couple of hours if they hadn't been located. They claimed God had found them. We normally referred to them as Merv and Pete, and were worried that their newly elevated status might go to their heads. The significance of all this was lost to most involved, but to me it was a massive high. I had organised the search that located them! What a feeling! We are a team of course, and no one person ever takes credit for our team effort, but that won't ever take away the feeling of euphoria. Two team members who had noticed the personal significance took me to the pub and bought me a pint, and I probably talked about it to anyone who would listen for days. Eleven years later, organising a search, successful or otherwise is more of a routine, but a successful conclusion is still very satisfying, but that first time is a memorable high point in my involvement with mountain rescue.

I'm sure I will experience more 'firsts',

but these three will stick in my memory for a long time.

A fourth first has occurred since first writing this – the first time I had to call off a resuscitation attempt. A woman had fallen from the path into Dungeon Ghyll, Great Langdale, a distance of about 40 metres. It was reported that CPR was being carried out by other walkers, but that she was seriously injured. Other team members arrived on scene and started to assess the situation. It wasn't good. As a deputy team leader, the responsibility for those initial decisions fell on me. She had no signs of life, and major head and neck and shoulder injuries. She had died, probably some time ago. First thing we had to do was convince the walker who had been doing CPR that we would stop. 'Let's just keep going!' he demanded. 'Until when?' was our reply. 'Until a doctor comes.' 'We're it. There's no Doctor.' 'Well just until!' He wasn't happy and I felt we'd let him down in some way. Obviously we hadn't, but the look in his eyes will stay with me for a long time. We then had to break the news to his walking companions. The ones who'd scrambled down obviously knew, but her fiancé was still up on the path above. A quick scramble up and we took him to one side and broke the news. It always amazes me how stoic people appear on the outside in these circumstances. Perhaps they realise they still have a mountain to get down. Her body was airlifted out of the Ghyll by the RAF, and the party was escorted to the valley.

It's when you get chatting in these circumstances you are reminded there are consequences. The woman was recently pregnant and they were here with friends planning their wedding. There never seems to be a right time to die, but there are quite clearly times when it is very wrong.

**Nick Owen Team Leader
Langdale Ambleside MRT**

Lakes

North East

Sunday, 30 July saw a call to one of Teesdale & Weardale's more unusual rescues. A dog walker had reported three sheep stuck on a ledge ten metres up a quarry face in Bollihope Quarry, near Frosterley.

The sheep had been on the ledge since at least the Saturday morning. Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service attended on Saturday evening and, after consulting with the farmer and the RSPCA, decided to leave them overnight to see if they could get down themselves. But, come Sunday morning, they were still on the ledge and the team was called.

When team members arrived, two of the sheep had disappeared, leaving a lonely lamb. Two team members were lowered to the ledge and, after some difficulty, managed to catch the lamb and secure it in a harness, before rescuer and lamb were lowered to the ground. After a quick check, the lamb seemed none the worse for wear and wandered off, leaving the team to enjoy a round of applause from the considerable crowd who had gathered there!

**Dave Bartles Smith
Teesdale & Weardale MRT**

Okay Babe... when you see the whites of their eyes... RUN!!!!



QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES JULY-SEPTEMBER 2006

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/07/2006 to 30/09/2006 It is grouped by region and shows the date (day/month) the incident began. It is not comprehensive as many incidents have yet to be reported.

Lake District

Cockermouth	26/09
Coniston	04/07, 05/07, 20/07, 04/08, 06/08, 12/08, 03/09
Duddon & Furness	27/08, 03/09, 03/09
Kendal	12/07, 19/07, 24/07, 16/09, 30/09
Keswick	04/07, 08/07, 08/07, 09/07, 11/07, 11/07, 18/07 20/07, 30/07, 31/07, 02/08, 07/08, 12/08, 16/08 16/08, 20/08, 22/08, 25/08, 27/08, 27/08, 28/08 29/08, 07/09, 08/09, 12/09, 17/09, 18/09, 21/09 25/09, 26/09
Kirkby Stephen	07/08, 12/08, 20/08, 20/09, 23/09, 30/09
Langdale Ambleside	01/07, 02/07, 03/07, 08/07, 09/07, 16/07, 16/07 31/07, 02/08, 12/08, 19/08, 21/08, 22/08, 25/08 27/08, 28/08, 30/08, 04/09, 10/09, 11/09, 15/09 16/09, 17/09, 23/09, 26/09, 30/09
Patterdale	08/07, 26/07, 27/07, 29/07, 09/08, 09/08, 09/08 15/08, 16/08, 19/08, 22/08, 25/08, 25/08, 31/08 01/09, 08/09, 14/09, 17/09, 23/09, 27/09, 30/09
Penrith	02/07, 03/07, 04/07, 25/07, 29/07, 29/07, 09/08 12/08, 16/08, 19/08, 22/08, 27/08, 28/08, 29/08 31/08, 01/09, 14/09, 17/09, 27/09
Wasdale	11/07, 13/07, 15/07, 22/07, 25/07, 30/07, 31/07 31/07, 01/08, 06/08, 10/08, 27/08, 30/08, 31/08 01/09, 02/09, 02/09, 03/09, 07/09, 10/09, 26/09

Mid-Pennine

Bolton	01/07, 02/07, 04/07, 08/07, 16/07, 16/07, 17/07 19/07, 22/07, 26/07, 20/08, 23/08, 05/09
Holme Valley	02/07, 16/07, 08/08, 23/08, 26/08
Rosendale & Pendle	08/07, 07/08

NE England

Cleveland	26/07, 02/08, 10/08, 14/08, 23/08
Northumberland NP	12/08
North of Tyne	12/08
Scarborough & District	14/08
Swaledale	12/08
Teesdale & Weardale	12/08

North Wales

Aberglaslyn	11/07, 13/07, 13/09, 20/09
Llanberis	03/07, 03/07, 08/07, 08/07, 14/07, 19/07, 20/07 23/07, 24/07, 11/08, 14/08, 17/08, 19/08, 22/08 24/08, 27/08, 27/08, 03/09, 06/09, 20/09, 23/09 24/09
North East Wales	23/07, 11/09
Ogwen Valley	08/07, 09/07, 11/07, 15/07, 16/07, 16/07, 05/08 12/08, 13/08, 14/08, 23/08, 01/09, 06/09, 11/09 14/09, 16/09, 17/09, 22/09
Outward Bound Wales	13/09, 28/09
South Snowdonia	05/07, 11/07, 13/07, 25/08, 13/09, 28/09
Snowdonia Nat Park	13/09

Peak District

Buxton	02/07, 24/07, 25/07, 26/07, 27/07, 28/07, 29/07 01/08, 03/08, 05/08, 12/08, 14/08, 17/08, 17/08 24/08, 14/09, 23/09
Derby	02/07, 04/08, 25/08, 03/09, 06/09, 13/09, 29/09
Edale	08/07, 24/07, 25/07, 26/07, 27/07, 28/07, 01/08 03/08, 12/08, 14/08, 17/08, 17/08, 24/08, 14/09 22/09, 29/09
Glossop	08/07, 11/07, 21/09, 22/09, 29/09, 29/09
Kinder	11/07, 21/07, 23/07, 14/08, 17/08, 17/09, 21/09 22/09, 29/09, 29/09
Oldham	01/07, 09/07, 10/07, 11/07, 11/07, 15/07, 19/07 20/07, 23/07, 26/07, 07/08, 14/08, 25/08, 10/09 21/09, 22/09, 22/09, 29/09, 29/09
Woodhead	21/09, 22/09, 29/09, 29/09

South Wales

Brecon	20/07, 22/07, 30/07, 10/08, 13/08, 17/08, 17/08 18/08, 19/08, 19/08, 30/08, 03/09, 03/09
Western Beacons	20/07, 22/07, 10/08, 17/08, 18/08, 19/08, 22/08 30/08
Central Beacons	20/07, 22/07, 30/07, 30/07, 10/08, 18/08, 19/08 19/08
Longtown	20/07

South West England

Exmoor	08/07, 12/07, 20/07, 02/08, 14/09, 16/09
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Yorkshire Dales

CRO	04/07, 14/07, 15/07, 16/07, 10/08, 24/08, 02/09
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RAF

RAF Leeming	12/08
RAF Valley	14/08

SARDA

SARDA (England)	08/07, 20/07, 12/08, 27/08, 06/09, 13/09, 14/09 14/09, 29/09
SARDA (Lakes)	09/07, 31/07, 12/08, 27/08, 27/08, 28/08, 30/08 02/09, 03/09, 26/09
SARDA (Wales)	13/07, 23/07, 14/08, 11/09, 13/09
SARDA (South Wales)	03/07, 22/07, 22/07, 30/07, 30/07, 13/08, 18/08 19/08, 22/08
SARDA (Scotland)	21/05
SARDA (S/ern Scotland)	12/08

MRC (Scotland)

Moffat	12/8
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Non specialists (Non MR)

	023/07, 14/08, 19/08, 11/09, 13/09, 24/09
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Coastguard Personnel

	30/07
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A major search with a very sad outcome, based on Catbells west of Keswick, was undertaken over the 22/23 November. Overnight there were 55 personnel involved from Keswick, Cockermouth and Penrith teams, with search dogs and handlers from SARDA Lakes. Rescue 131 from RAF Boulmer attended overnight using their forward looking infra-red search capability.

The search was for a lone 63 year old walker staying with his family at Braithwaite near Keswick. He'd set off to walk up Catbells from Hawse End at around noon and was due back at his accommodation by 3.00pm, where he needed to take his medication for a serious medical condition. The alarm was raised by his family at 6.00pm when he had failed to return. The first teams were on the hill by 7.00pm, with the last of the overnight searchers returning to Keswick at 6.00am.

Given the medical condition of the casualty and the poor weather conditions overnight, the search was intensified the following morning. A total of 95 rescue team personnel were deployed, re-covering areas undertaken during the night and also extending the boundaries of the search area. Teams from Keswick, Duddon & Furness, Kirkby Stephen, Cockermouth, Wasdale and RAF Leeming were supported by search dogs and handlers from SARDA Lakes, SARDA England and SARDA Scotland. The prevailing weather conditions precluded the use of the helicopter.

The search had been concentrating on the planned route from his start point and his options for return to Braithwaite from Catbells, and also included areas where he may have strayed in the event of an error or poor weather. Given the late start time of the walk and the time of going dark at this time of year, this resulted in what was still a fairly large search area but relatively confined by significant boundaries. The walker was not

particularly experienced and was only carrying what he was wearing.

As morning areas were being cleared, the search area was again being expanded. It was whilst the Cockermouth team were moving into a new search area that they came across a walker who, along with his wife, had come across a body. One of the first rescue team personnel on scene was a doctor with the Cockermouth team. The walker's two year old Labrador had stayed with his owner until he was found. Flapjack was needed to coax the dog away to allow rescuers to approach!

The location of the find was a significant distance (1.5 to 2 miles) away from the route of the walker and outside the primary search areas. The thanks of the Keswick team go to all who helped with the search in what were at times very poor weather conditions.

Lakes



On 20 September 1976, a single engine plane crashed in thick cloud high on the Galtee Mountains in Co Tipperary. The plane was en route back from Kilbrittain Air Strip near Bandon, Co Cork to Abbeyshrule in Co Longford when the accident happened. Sadly, the pilot and his two companions were killed.

The dead were Mr Tom Gannon (40) a solicitor, married and a father of five children from Dromond Co Leitrim. Mr Richard Reilly, in his sixties with an adult family, a garage owner from Dublin Road Longford, and Mr James Byrne (56) a farmer and father of three children from Abbeyshrule. The crash site was located by Gardai with help from members of Tipperary Adventure Sports Club, from the Tipperary town area, mountaineers from other clubs and local people. A helicopter from the Air Corps removed the three men to Our Lady's Hospital in Cashel.

Thirty years on, the harrowing events are still fresh in the memories of all who helped

on that sad day, many of who were asked because of their expertise in the mountains. In the months that followed, hillwalkers and mountaineers from clubs all over the South East of Ireland came together to form SEMRA (South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association) a voluntary organisation with one aim – to help people. That work continues to this day. This plane crash is the first incident in the history log of the team.

In September 2006, a walk was organised to the crash site and family members joined the SEMRA team. With the mist swirling all around us a moment's silence was observed, thoughts turned to loved ones lost, but also of the work we do and all the people SEMRA have helped in the last thirty years.

In October a memorial stone which overlooks the crash site was erected and, in a very emotional ceremony, was unveiled. Family and friends of the men travelled from all over Ireland, and were joined by local people and members of the team. Carved on the stone are the following two lines from the poem 'High Flight' by John Gillespie Magee, a young pilot killed in World War Two...

*Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God*

Jimmy Barry SEMRA
South Eastern
Mountain Rescue Association

IMRA

IKAR-CISA 11-15 OCTOBER 2006 KRANJSKA GORA, SLOVENIA

A personal view from Paul Horder

The conference was attended by 234 delegates from 29 organisations in 25 countries. Mike Margeson (MRC Equipment Officer), Dr John Ellerton (MRC Medical Officer) and Paul Horder (IKAR Rep) attended, as well as Dr David Syme from Scotland. It was also good to see Roger Jones and Kevin de Silva from Ogwen MRT attending as observers. The following is my selection of ad hoc notes from the Congress.



Association in the USA) described the new **Mountain Rescue Credentialing Framework**, set up following Katrina and Twin Towers disasters, which controls and guides the accreditation and certification of individuals and organisations which wish to become involved in urban and back country search and rescue, whether on a part-time or voluntary basis.

The French also spoke about their **training and accreditation system for mountain rescue personnel**. It takes two years for a policeman to attain the status of a mountain rescuer, involving 44 weeks of training – water, underground, snow, technical rock, etc. Only if then successful would he receive his diploma. The gendarmerie paid for the training. Bruno Jelk commented that it was fast becoming impossible to be a rescuer, with all of the legislation, expected standards, etc.

Dan Hourihan spoke about the **National Incident Management System** in the US. The Department of Homeland Security has developed a unified core for a variety of SAR agencies which are available to respond to national emergency situations. Minimum competency levels are defined and teams are expected to self-certify against agreed criteria. Dan said, 'We are not developing a standard, we are trying to meet what is coming'. The MRA had decided to develop its own policy so that central government didn't need to impose its own.

Once again, Bruno Jelk expressed concern that all of this legislature and the expectations of rescuers might ultimately rule out the volunteer. I wonder, does Mountain Rescue (England & Wales)

The **ABS system** (www.abs-airbag.com) was still the most effective system for protecting people when avalanched, but the least used. There had been 0% failure rates but the system would only operate if the pull-cord was activated. The question was asked if, with the increased level of safety equipment available, participants were tending to take greater risks.

Mammut described a **tragic accident** in which a man fell to the ground after the 2 x 9.5mm ropes broke when he was undertaking a pendulum jump from a bridge. He sustained severe injuries from which he has not yet recovered. It had been a windy day and it was thought the ropes may have caught on the bridge structure, but maybe the ropes purely got caught with each other.

An account was made of the **Eurocopter (EC145) crash in the Pyrenees** in June 2006. It was taking part in an exercise at 2685m when it struck the rock face and fell 300m, killing four people. It had been hovering on one runner. Discussions were mainly concerned with the tail rotor which may have been struck by a rock fall or caught by a downdraught. There had previously been concerns over the tail rotor on this aircraft. Some rescuers had refused to fly in this aircraft until investigations were complete, but the consensus was that the EC145 was safe to fly in mountains.

There was a remarkable case of a buried avalanche victim using his mobile phone to call for help after he had been there for three hours – once he had been able to move enough to get hold of his phone. So the signal can work through snow?! He had been buried 10m outside the search area!

...a remarkable case of a buried avalanche victim using his mobile phone to call for help after he'd been there for three hours....

need some kind of paid administrator to develop a collection of policies for the UK?

Marcus Falk, a statistician, gave a very technical presentation of **avalanche accident analysis**. His summary was basically that no amount of research could reliably predict avalanches because of the number of variables involved.

It is of note that, during my eleven years of attending IKAR, there have been discussions on everything under the sun in terms of mountain rescue, but never has the topic of charging for rescues been raised. The rescuers, themselves, are simply not interested! The rescuers really are preoccupied with ensuring nothing but the best can be done for the people they rescue.

BEING A MOUNTAIN RESCUE CHAIRMAN

Pat Holland IMRA

At my election three years ago, I believed my role as an effective chairman was to bring and support needed change in MR; make strong links with stakeholders; conclude negotiations with government; support and protect MR teams; make IMRA relevant and necessary; act as a mediator and consensus-builder; and be a leader with a small 'L'.

There were various tasks set for me and we have made much progress. The Gardaí have committed publicly to appoint a liaison officer to each team. We had an additional €100,000 from government for a Development and Research Officer, funding for national development projects and additional funding for the smaller teams. Good relationships now exist. The national governmental committee on MR is becoming more active, we've agreed a national training framework and our first national training manual has had a successful trial run and been evaluated by a cross-team group. A second manual for party leaders is on the way.

We now have an agreed policy on lowland search and on helping other services to take on that challenge. We've agreed the level of contingency funding which IMRA will hold as a reserve in case of a team emergency (loss of vehicle or similar disaster). Team assessments, stats, equipment checking courses etc are continuing. Funds have also been received from several local and national bodies.

The new National Emergency Framework makes clear our call-out authority. Search planning is being promoted nationally. We have good committee meetings and our annual conference is now well established as a meeting worth being at. We've had some good PR and a website www.mountainrescue.ie.

We've continued with our national exercises and have continued to compile operational and contact lists for all teams. The Croagh Patrick annual cooperative operation continues, and a committee policy to work for '€20,000 'living grant' for all teams was agreed.

However, this is only part of the story. Achieving tasks comes through good process and relationships underpinned by communication.

Politics

It is vital as chair to be politically astute and informed but not

machievellian. You need to carefully calculate proposals and the 'tipping point', to see if a proposal will succeed even before it's put on the table. If you are not fundamentally democratic in respecting the views of the teams you are in deep trouble.

The exercise of power

You should not do anything that would directly hurt any individual team and must be aware of the limited power/status of the chair. We need to build and work by consensus in the committee. That doesn't mean we accept the 'veto of the empty chair' or 'single team rule'. We must serve the interests of all teams, even when some are missing. Accept the nature of the organisation – a co-operative group of independent democratic bodies. With subsidiarity, decisions should be taken as close the effect as possible, not centralised. But we can challenge assumptions, ask questions and prompt teams to network more.

There may be tension between strong, independent democratic teams led by strong personalities and a central system seeking to make necessary change but dependent on the teams for support. This is helped by being very careful about the organisational model and proposals you adopt.

Being an effective chair means giving people their space to express themselves. All too often I have seen a chair respond immediately to someone's point, in effect shutting them down, often unintentionally. People need to feel heard. The chair should ensure all are heard and then sum up the consensus, perhaps giving their personal view, before suggesting a way forward. The decision on how to proceed must be owned by the whole body. A collective decision is less easily challenged and causes less resentment than an autocratic chair. Equally an inefficient chair exasperates the committee.

In our association, the real power holders are the team leaders and their position must be respected. They have not achieved their position easily and need to be kept on side. We can suggest changes, but we must respect it when they say 'No'. They need to feel that you are implementing their needs. It is vital to spend time consulting them and not surprise them with an unexpected proposal. Team leaders,

like most powerful beings, do not take kindly to shocks. We cannot assume because they are our good friends, they will automatically agree to all we propose.

Conflict

It is best not to ignore conflict within the group or to avoid an issue. Sometimes issues have to be named, views have to be heard and then we try to close ranks. We should not be afraid of difference but we must try to facilitate a consensus after a debate.

Personally

A chairman must invest time and energy into the process, selected projects and their chairmanship. Our own personal interests must often be put on hold as we encourage people to take up training opportunities we would like for ourselves.

It is very important to be positive towards, and be known as a chair who is positive towards, projects. I have found that working as a facilitative leader, not autocratic, is central to my philosophy of respect for the teams. I've also had a constant concern for the education, training and personal development of all members.

Community development principles need to be fundamental. We have to accept realities and use them positively. You should support anyone doing anything positive which fits the following seven key questions:-

- Is this an national issue.
- Is it good for the casualty?
- Is it good for the teams?
- Will it hurt any team?
- Will it be supported?
- Has the team suggesting it done their political homework?
- What might happen?

If the answer to more than one of these questions is negative, you have to ask yourself do you want to get involved with this proposal. There's a good chance it may end up as a row or a game on the Drama Triangle with you as Rescuer, Persecutor or Victim – none of which are good for a chairman of a democratic federation. Don't get involved in local issues, stay strategic. There is so much to do you must preserve your sanity and energy for major issues. You may need to make a plan for yourself to not get involved in everything.

It is vital to be positive. The teams look to you for some hope and positive benefits. We should not be unrealistic

but if we are consistently negative, teams will discount us and our work. Team leaders especially need the national chairman to be positive and helpful – they have enough to worry about as it is.

Leadership

The national chairman puts the hard question to the teams but doesn't ultimately decide. He/she is the one who receives a hard question from one team intended for another! Keep giving basic transferable messages eg. 'each team should not have to reinvent the wheel' to create an awareness of the change process. Live the changes you are trying to bring about. Chase opportunities for others. Having lead the groups to a project, start it up or help start it up and then step back or delegate. We have to let others lead. If we try to lead everything or own every action, we block progress. We should approve and own the process, not the projects. We cannot force people to do any particular project, but only help volunteers do what they want to do already. The chair must protect and trust the process. It is very important to treat all with respect and integrity. Verbal contact at the start of each meeting is vital.

Methods

We need to be strategic in our aims but tactical/flexible in the methods used. Facilitative leadership means agreeing to what the majority wants (protecting the outsider/objector) while ensuring the end target remains in sight. Working with the national committee means listening, learning and constantly modifying plans. Keeping the show on the road is more important than most single issues.

Create added value (not just one benefit from one action). While some teams are still poor, most are managing to survive and time is now the rarest commodity. Each project should have a number of benefits.

Aims

The process is of building capacity, supporting change and minding relationships. Central to this is to keep bringing teams together in as many ways as possible and to encourage teams to do things together for themselves. Networking and collaboration may bring unforeseen benefits. The aim is to build up each team so they are strong, independent and mature, with

good links to other teams and agencies so they can play a full, informed part in national and local discussions and developments. They need to become self sufficient financially and organisationally.

Skills

An understanding of how groups develop and work and their needs (time structures, dynamics, boundaries, locations, development etc) is vital. Each team should ensure their chair get such training early in their career.

Culture

A confident team aiming for excellence needs a 'no-blame culture'. We have to accept our limits but preserve our abilities to invent new ways to do things. We must be prepared to 'try it as a pilot project' and to write it off without recriminations, but with learning, if it fails. This ethos must be set and supported by the chairman and team leader. Fear of change or experimentation can lead to decline, isolation and irrelevancy in changing circumstances. A proactive 'search for excellence', prompted by operational needs and based upon hard operational data will create a team seeking and open to change. Equally, we need to agree set standards, to short-circuit endless experimentation.

Relationships

Good relationships are key to achieving tasks efficiently and effectively. Trust, respect and mutual understanding are key to a good relationship. Trust is based on good communication.

Relationships with government bodies must be carried out in a mature professional way. Never attempt to threaten government unless you have several thousand potential votes in your pocket. Far more realistic to consider how we might persuade government – a wise solution involves give and take on both sides.

Negotiation with any other party involves a level of trust and knowledge of each other's limits of manoeuvre. However, this can cause problems if teams think you've become too close to those with whom you are negotiating – keep as close to the teams as those across the negotiating table. A planned rotation of office holders is useful in allowing those who are concerned about negotiation stances to enter talks themselves and find out how it works. It's important to remember that while you have a viewpoint composed of the needs of all the teams, they have their own unique attitude, which must be dealt with.

It is vital to try to maintain the relationship with the teams, especially your own – once the term of office is finished, you will have to reintegrate with them and may have to re-establish

loyalties to the home team, having been loyal to the needs of them all. You may have to address the home brownie point index having expended so many on national affairs. It's also possible you'll have to physically recover from the strain of trying to lead a national service in your 'spare' time.

In dealing with agencies and the civil service, it is possible to shake their assumptions by asking powerful questions. My two favourites are 'Who are we working for?' which forces an agency to look at its core values and 'What can we do to help?' which can disarm a tense and confrontational meeting. In the first case, however the agency concerned can get irritable at being made to realise it isn't putting the needs of the casualty first and, in the second case, there's the danger of putting oneself into a subordinate position. Nevertheless such tactics are useful. Often we can make their need into our developmental opportunity but it is important to remember their nature and pace. The wheels of the civil service move very slowly and the uninformed can get impatient and blow the benefits totally by complaining about the pace of progress. Better to be a friend than an enemy of a government body, especially a friend who is useful. The challenge is to help them be pro-active developmental agencies and to maintain civil service committees at a high rate of developmental activity. Keep throwing ideas and proposals onto the table, especially those linked with those agencies whose representatives are not attending. Their attendance will improve if their department figures on the agenda. It is also, as an aside, vital to ensure that all recurring grants are inflation linked, or they will fade away in time, like an untended committee.

As a national executive, when we meet we may want to socialise and chat together. It is important to consider how that might seem to ordinary team members who might see such behaviour as elitist. When the teams meet and there are national executive members present, the executive members should be very careful in the messages given by their behaviour. They should, for example, make sure to distribute themselves among those present to find out what is going on, listen and be listened to and generally be available. If they feel they've done that enough or are tired of it, maybe it's time for a change of role.

Consultation

If we believe in the democratic process and accept the community development ethos, we must commit to a full and real consultation process. This means not only accepting what

Continued on page 23

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Photo: Courtesy of Kinder Mountain Rescue Team

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Peli Products go Heads Up

Peli Products now offer more choice than ever before – with new torch models using innovative design and the latest technology. But the quality, reliability and durability that have become the Peli hallmark remain the same. Peli stand by this reputation and offer the legendary 'You break it, we replace it' lifetime guarantee on all the Peli range.

The new 2680 Heads Up Lite is the first in the Heads Up series to feature Recoil LED technology. This design focuses the 1 watt light back into the reflector to reflect it forward as a bright, white beam of 33 lumens. The 2680 is also submersible to 150 metres, making it an ideal choice for rescue situations where a hands-free light is required.

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This latest addition completes this comprehensive range of Recoil LED torches. The series also offers the choice of hand torches, right-angled versions and helmet-mountable models, all combining excellent battery performance with unrivalled LED light output.

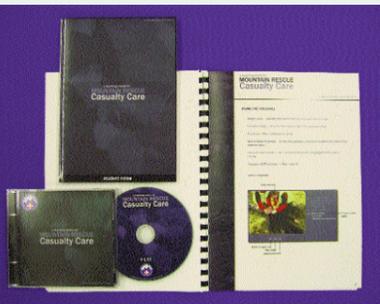
NESRA CASUALTY CARE PACKAGE

In 2003, NESRA identified issues with the teaching of casualty care across the area, including a lack of suitable literature, people reinventing the wheel and inconsistency with the delivery of courses. We asked the medical sub group to look at the issues and report back and a project group consisting of Paul Fell (project manager) Graham Brown (coordinator/editor) and Shirley Priestley (Treasurer), set about identifying the format and content of the project.

It was decided to produce an interactive CD-rom consisting of text video clip and animation set to the MRC Casualty Care (England and Wales) syllabus. This CD is accompanied by a set of teaching notes and separately available student notes.

The decision to produce was easy. The actual work proved to be a lot harder. Late in 2003 Shirley raised over £10,000 from trusts. This money allowed the project to move forward and, in February 2004, we spent a whole weekend filming the video clips. It was important that the film was as lifelike as possible and, therefore, takes place outside on terrain familiar to mountain rescue.

In the following three months, all the authors were recruited to write the sections. The animation and 3D imaging was then developed over the following year. In November 2005, we presented a draft to the MRC medical sub group and gained their approval to make the project available to teams across England and Wales. During 2006 we progressed with the CD and developed the student notes and, in September 2006, we were ready to launch at the MRC conference. Finally, in November 2006 the website was launched offering information on the CD as well as the opportunity to download a demo version.



It should be stressed that this project has been undertaken in our own time

and with no financial gain by ourselves – all the trust money has been used for the development and production of the package.

Teaching notes

- Mimic presentations on CDRom
- Colour coded to CDRom
- Include background info on presentations
- Offer practical teaching ideas

Student notes

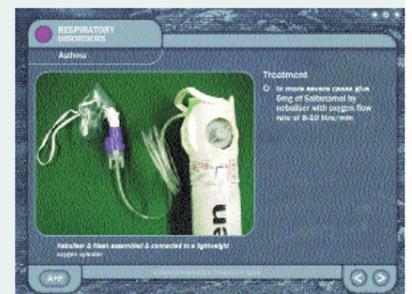
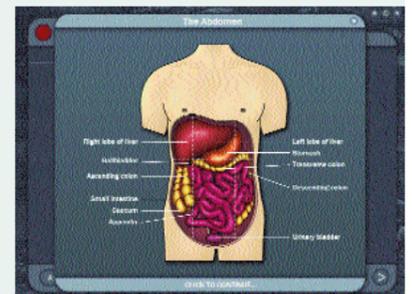
- Contain additional background information
- Include a glossary of medical terms
- Follow the MRC Guidelines

It is not designed as a teach yourself package but to assist trainers in their delivery of the syllabus. The advantages of the CD are that the video clips can be paused at any time and the animated sections brought to the screen, then the particular section resumed from where it was left.

To download a trial version log onto

www.nesracasare.co.uk

For further information, please contact Paul Fell paul@pfell5.fsnet.co.uk



Continued from page 21

response the teams make to a proposal, assuming they have been well briefed, but also giving them sufficient time to formulate a response. From experience, I would estimate it take three months to receive a considered response from the teams to an important proposal. It would be counter-productive rushing them into a faster response in anything other than emergencies. Consultation runs in both directions. Teams should know you and be able to ring you up when they need information or advice.

Framework for development: the ladder of collaboration.

In using this useful tool, try to move the teams up the ladder of collaboration, even to oppose you. If inter-team networking generally is improving all the time, you are on the right road.

Phase 1 – Networking. (Meet, talk and tell...)

Phase 2 – Co-ordination (...and consider before you act...)

Phase 3 – Co-operation (...and jointly plan...)

Phase 4 – Collaboration (...and develop new projects as a partnership)

Thus, teams meeting together move from getting to know each other to joint actions and eventually completely new shared projects.

Some other tools

Introductions at meetings are vital. Even where you think most people know each other, make sure you do a round of introductions. This is a crucial step in the psychological development of the meeting and cannot be left out. It is vital also for the chair to agree a psychological contract with those present which will not hinder discussion but will prevent personalised attacks or remarks. The facilitation pause is a most useful tool also. A chair should never presume they know it all, rather put the issue to the

meeting, go silent and wait. Wait even until the silence shrieks at you. Eventually someone will open the debate. By being silent you are letting others have their say (and finding out which way the majority lies!). There are many ways to take the temperature of a meeting, and many ways to vote, ranging from not voting at all by identifying a consensus from the speakers to giving everyone ten votes and letting them allocate their votes to the options after calm consideration and so outflank the attractive or overbearing speaker.

Politics and MR

It is fashionable to condemn politics but in general it is a basic and honourable pursuit. From the moment we realised we got things easier from one parent than the other, politics entered our life. It is the negotiated search for what we need to fulfil our aim of helping the casualty. It is an essential tool for any MR team, the

process of discussion and negotiation with other teams, the national committee and outside agencies. We must all engage with others in a skilled, professional, considered, realistic and mature way. If we do not, we will either be powerless or dismissed as irrelevant and naive. The role of chair is vital in this process. We need skilled, capable, strong national leadership, operating in a facilitative model, and equally strong skilled capable local leadership in the teams. I want to affirm the values of consensus, leadership and facilitation. I want to affirm the role of the national and local chairs as the legitimate democratic representatives of the independent teams, working on their behalf and with their consent for their shared needs and aspirations.

Finally, three pieces of fundamental advice. Trust the process. Serve the teams. And get out while you are winning – do your term and then move onto other tasks, there is always plenty to do in MR!

SLOPE ASPECT... YOUR ULTIMATE SURVIVAL TOOL.



Stuart Johnston on knowing how to navigate when it really matters

Navigation might not have the sex appeal of abseiling and ice climbing but in my view it is the top priority mountain skill, and one that should always be taken seriously. Why? Well not least because navigational errors are one of the most common contributory causes of mountain accidents, the first point in a chain of events leading inexorably to a more obvious mishap. Navigating may well be simple in essence, but in practice it's a difficult skill (or range of skills) to acquire. Some of us might prefer to follow the lead of others!

But what if you need to walk on your own or much worse become separated from your search team, lost or even injured? Similarly, in perfect weather conditions it can be tempting to follow your nose with a quick glance at the map here or there to check your position – we've all done it, but what if the weather closes unexpectedly in darkness and on unfamiliar terrain? It's also easy to lose your position and confidence. Having the confidence to relocate/work out your position accurately will not only prevent mishaps from evolving into something unwanted but will at all times help you make the right navigational decisions.

Navigation can be very frustrating when you are faced with foul weather situations. It may seem a better idea to simply avoid bad weather, but guaranteed good weather in the British mountains, especially in rescue situations, is quite rare.

Slope aspect comes into its own when you need to critically determine your position on the mountain in poor visibility such as white out conditions and darkness. The most efficient navigation technique for determining position is the technique known as slope aspect.

This technique essentially informs you about direction of travel whether ascending, descending or contouring and you can use it any time on the mountain and in any weather conditions.

The more you practice, in all conditions, the better your judgement will become when faced with tricky route finding decisions on big mountains in poor visibility.

Essential equipment you will need

- ✓ Map + waterproof map cover
- ✓ Compass – recommend Silva type 4 or something similar
- ✓ Watch with altimeter – extremely useful when confirming position with known height

When unsure of your position consider the following steps.



1: A SILVA TYPE 4 COMPASS HAS ALL THE FEATURES NECESSARY FOR NAVIGATING IN THE MOUNTAINS WHATEVER THE CONDITIONS

Step 1 Taking a bearing

Stop, and take a bearing down or up your current line of travel (if contouring take a bearing at 90° to your travel line either up or down the slope).

Subtract the magnetic variation currently 3°. This method is known as mag to grid = get rid.



2: MAP SETTING BY COMPASS IS ESSENTIAL IN POOR VISIBILITY

Step 2 Map setting

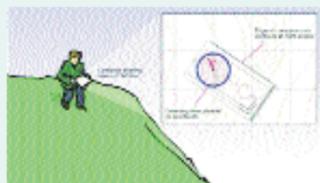
Map setting is not hard, but it is the single most important skill to be learned.

Simply drop your compass on to your map and orientate map grid North to magnetic North on the compass, remember this technique is used all the time in navigation especially in poor visibility when observing features on the ground to the map is difficult.

Step 3 Position compass on map

Position the compass baseplate on the map roughly in the area you have been walking, maintaining the north arrow in the compass housing parallel with grid North on the map use the grid North lines on the map to assist with accuracy.

Slowly move your compass across the map maintaining North to North in the area you suspect you might be. Remember to maintain parallel lines with compass and map whilst doing this.



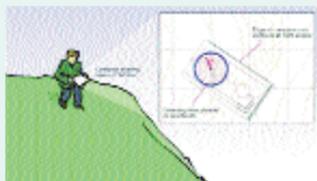
3: THE COMPASS INDICATES THE CORRECT POSITION

Illustration from 'Hillwalking' by Steve Long with permission.

Step 4 Lines on baseplate crossing at 90° with contour lines

As you do this you will note the aspect or direction you have been walking or established bearing... indicating line of travel.

Where the lines on the compass base plate or edge of the compass cross the contour line or lines at exactly 90° will indicate your approximate line of travel and position.



4: COMPASS BASEPLATE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL LINE CROSSING AT 90° TO THE CONTOUR

Step 5 Assessing height and location

Using your watch altimeter which you have set correctly from a previous known height, confirm your current altitude and cross reference the identified contour at 90° as above in step 4. Depending on the shape of the contour for example; a uniform slope, you may find some or many contours crossing at 90° this is where your altimeter will help determine the nearest likely contour and location.

Step 6 Determining location

Using your contour interpretation skills, look for obvious and less obvious features on the ground that relate to your map, combined with known altitude and 90° contour angle with compass edge or base-plate line you will have surely determined your approximate



5: ALWAYS MONITOR THE ACCURACY OF YOUR PREDICTION – AN EXCELLENT TOOL WHEN DETERMINING YOUR EXACT OR APPROXIMATE ALTITUDE

location (most times absolute position and direction of travel is achieved). You have established slope aspect.

Step 7 Planning a safe route

You may have discovered you have been walking in the wrong direction, potentially towards avalanche terrain or cliffs.

Having re-established your position you can plan a safe route to fulfil your objectives either to carry on searching or rendezvous with other team members or walk off the mountain to safety.

Top tips: Navigation tactics

- Always time navigation legs in poor visibility at half the normal time, with good visibility 2-3 km is about right.
- Features will look much larger in poor daylight visibility and torch light in darkness, never make assumptions always get a clear 360° feel of your position.
- Use a good head torch with powerful beam and white light function
- Remember! Features will always look and feel different on the ground to what you expected – the key tip is to always use scale to identify terrain, feature length and width combined with observation of shape and angle.
- Practice walking on a bearing in a straight line in poor visibility, it's quite hard to attain 100% accuracy, only well practised navigators will be successful.
- In poor visibility, navigate to more obvious terrain features and avoid less obvious features such as small streams buried deep under the snowpack. Always choose terrain features with significant shapes and angle, they are much easier to locate.
- Another method used for determining a fixed position is to deploy your handheld GPS. Although an excellent navigational aid, it needs to be used wisely and be aware of its potential shortcomings.

Stuart Johnston MIC is co-author of the 'Mountain Skills Training Handbook' and 'The Hillwalker's Guide to Mountaineering'. Check out www.climbmts.co.uk for courses and further advice.

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Pauline Sanderson Glenmore Lodge

I went to Tim, my boss at Glenmore Lodge, and said, 'I want to do the longest climb on earth by cycling over 8000km from the Dead Sea in Jordan to Mt Everest Base Camp and then climb to the summit of the big girl herself... what do you think???? Oh, and by the way can I have six months off to do it?' His response was suitably mixed. 'I think you are crazy! Six months! It sounds fantastic!' Thankfully he was suitably inspired to let Phil, an instructor at The Lodge (and my mountaineering partner and husband who came to do the Everest section with me) and myself take unpaid leave to go off and do the adventure of a lifetime. I had eight weeks before leaving for Jordan. All I had left to do was rent the flat, get fit and find somebody to cover my job for six months and Phil for three months. Where there is a will...



SNOW AND BIKES IN TURKEY
MAIN PICTURE: FINAL TRAVERSE

Dom Faulkner was the Expedition Leader and mastermind behind the challenge. He had spent two years preparing, along with help from others. Sponsorship and fundraising events had been a major part of financing the venture. We were also raising money for charity, and still are (see everestmax.com). This made the whole thing not only an adventure, but a worthwhile adventure.

Our team consisted of five cyclists and would-be Everest summiteers and two support team. I had only met two of them for one night. Believe it or not, the question of whether I would get on with them or not never crossed my mind.

As it was, my gut reaction that anybody signing up for the trip would be my kind of person was absolutely right. What a fantastic

team! I reckon it took a few weeks to settle into each other's quirky habits and from then on banter ruled the day. The more adverse the situation the more we rose to the challenge and made it fun. The most consistent challenge we had to face was the weather. We cycled through torrential rain, snow, sandstorms and wind. In fact, name any weather condition at its most dramatic and we had it! We had no choice as we had deadlines. We needed to be in Kathmandu ready to leave for the mountain by 1 April, and we needed several days before that to get the freight and admin sorted. We had also already been delayed by over a week because of our Iranian visas. We could not afford to stop for weather... we had thirteen weeks to get to Kathmandu from Jordan!

The first day on the bikes was one

of my most nervous. I was the oldest and least rehearsed at long distance cycling. If I was not up to standard on the first day, it would have been easy to fly home with the harsh reality that it was too late to train. Our first day was 75 km from the shores of the Dead Sea back to Amman with a height gain of over 1200m (not including the ups we had to do when losing height). Intimidated?? Yes!!! As it was I held my own and, although the slowest, there were no egos to deal with and the supportive nature of the team was apparent from the beginning. After that, a short day was under 100km and a long one was over 150km. All of us managed fine and as time went on (about six weeks) I actually started to race with the leaders... they humoured me well.

By the time we got to Everest Base Camp, we were such a good team, it was mixed emotions of celebration and tears. It had been such a successful trip you wanted to celebrate, but at the same time incredibly sad because that stage was over and never to be repeated. I felt very lucky.

We were joined on the mountain by eight other climbers (including Phil). The team size had doubled, and we were going to be in the same place for the next 7 weeks... it really was all change!

Having Phil there meant I automatically felt 100 times safer. I'd never doubted we were going to summit, but now I knew we would do it in style. Yes, I am a big Phil fan, but also a big fan of climbing with people you know and trust on a mountain. Everest conjures up so many different images for so many people. Some associate it with the ultimate challenge, others the ultimate queue for a summit and all those in-between. I was somewhere in the middle. Now I've been there I have very different ideas. I have huge respect for the dangers that are involved but believe that it is 70% judgement and 30% luck. If the weather comes in earlier than the best forecasts can say or you get sick, that is bad luck. Everything else is down to experience, team and kit.

The harmony was not as consistent as on the bike section as we were now geographically split into those



CYCLING TO BASE CAMP AS A PACK

at Base Camp, intermediate camp and Advanced Base Camp. This was to confirm to me that it is always best to talk face to face on important issues. For the first time in the trip we had disagreements but, let's face it, this is a life and death experience, not a walk up Snowdon.

Despite these few incidents, the trip was an utter success. I was privileged to be chosen to climb in the first party with Phil. We climbed without sherpas and it felt right. As we left Camp 3 for the final summit day push I turned to Phil and said 'If I get snappy, don't take it personally... I am just scared!' As it was we were in perfect harmony the way up and down and saved all our energy for the climb. We passed very steep drop offs and had to do some tricky mixed rock and snow climbing, much trickier than I had been lead to believe, we also passed three bodies - very sad and humbling reminders that we were in the death zone. I had to talk to myself and convince myself that they did something wrong and we were doing everything right. We reached the top. The weather was perfect. The views were amazing and we were both feeling fine. I had carried the video to capture the moment that the EVERESTMAX team had reached the goal we had all been focused on for the last six months. I was euphoric when I used the radio to call down to the team at ABC. They cheered and passed the radio around. It was a true team success and I was the lucky one who could send the news from the

summit. Phil however, had his professional head on and knew that we were at our most vulnerable on the summit. It had taken nine hours to get there and would take the best part of six down. We had more than enough oxygen for that time but not by much. So off we went after 15 minutes of being at the top of the world.

Our descent was straightforward but long (six hours to Camp 3). It is a tricky descent down the steps as you can't really use a belay plate and any slip would inevitably lead to a serious stretch of vertical rock ie. until the next jumbar knot or anchor. We were tired but never relaxed and our adrenalin kept us focused. Camp 3 was in sight and we both felt an element of relief.

Then I found it hard to breathe. I signalled to Phil whom was a bit

ahead of me that my oxygen was out... bit of a problem as we only had the dregs of our first bottles left. Phil calmly got the dregs bottle out when he saw my face was turning blue and then double checked my supply when I reached him. Fortunately, the situation was remedied very quickly when he saw that I had somehow knocked the nozzle that increases/decreases the flow. Phew! I had felt claustrophobic very quickly. It is like being taken from sea level to 5000 metres and dropped. Well it felt like it.

We made it down to Camp 2 and due to a miscommunication among the team, all our descent food had been eaten, including the emergency rations... we had just climbed Everest, had a 17 hour non-stop day plus no sleep since the day before... no food. Not good. But we



CAMP 3 ON A LEDGE

had a Snicker bar and a discarded tin of hotdogs I had picked on my way through Camp 2.

Needless to say we slept like logs that night. By the time we got down to North Col, the next team were on their way up. They filled us in on all the deaths that had happened over the last three days that we had no idea about. One of them was our friend Jaque from the French team. Suddenly I found myself not wanting my friends to carry on. A wave of trepidation came over me and I did not want to transfer that to them because, of course, they should attempt it. They carried on and we stayed with them on their successful bid but in worse conditions.

I am very proud of Sarah who was the least experienced of the team on the mountains. She decided that she would stop at Camp 3 as she didn't feel she had enough experience. What a sensible decision. It is only from Camp 3 that having crampon and winter climbing as second nature, means that you can concentrate on the other elements that are less familiar, such as

oxygen, altitude and buddy watching at a high level. Buddy watching is so important. Any strange behaviour is a big sign that things are not right and you need to be turning back asap!

As soon as we reached ABC, I was on the phone home to family. I had

an overwhelming gush of emotions and splurged it all out. The first time we felt truly safe in over six days. As a bonus we were told that we were the first British couple to summit Everest. We never knew that before we left. Ironically, the press were more interested in that than in the fact three people had just complete the Longest Climb On Earth for the first time in history and we were British. Media!

It was an amazing journey with amazing people who all had relatively normal lives, a teacher,

marketing manager, gym instructor and two students. If I could pass any words of inspiration, it would be that if you ever have the opportunity to do something that you feel in your heart you could do it... DO IT! I live by the cliché that life is not a dress rehearsal and it has worked on many occasions for me. I have done things that don't naturally seem sensible but are ultimately fulfilling. I would have loved this journey if we were the last people to do the longest climb on earth.



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