

mountain rescue

APRIL 2011

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ISSUE 36

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SPECIALIST BLUE LIGHT EQUIPMENT INSTALLERS



LEFT: WOODHEAD MRT LAND ROVER CENTRE & RIGHT: BUXTON MRT LAND ROVER

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**WELCOME TO
ISSUE 36**

Mountain Rescue is the membership magazine for mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales.

Contributions should be sent to the editor at the address below. Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

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**NEXT ISSUE
ISSUE 37**

Copy Deadline:
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Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JOES/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

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.

FRONT PAGE

Swaledale MRT and friends in action at their 'Exercise Swale Rescue' Challenge day in March
Photo: Swaledale MRT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

**mountain
rescue**



**David Allan
Chairman**

There do appear to be an increasing number of occasions when individuals or parties contact mountain rescue to let us know that darkness has fallen on the hills. Closely related are the times when we are informed that visibility has been seriously impaired due to mist or other weather variants.

This issue has been discussed quite widely and, as reported elsewhere, was a focus of attention at the recent Mountain Safety Forum. There has been an assumption that the principal reason for the calls has been the absence of torch, map and compass; or at the very least a lack of knowledge about their deployment. Undoubtedly in many instances this is the case but perhaps another factor should be brought into the equation.

Over the past two centuries the human race has endeavoured to deplete darkness, developing elaborate means to illuminate the environment throughout the 24 hour span. This is but one aspect of a turning away from the natural world. The avoidance of inclement weather during most of societies' day to day existence runs in parallel to the issue of darkness. A minority of people will instinctively recognise the difference of a hot dry wind and one bearing imminent rain.

Society has been involved in a headlong rush into a Brave New World of a completely man controlled environment where the 'real world' becomes the one that is manmade. This has been occurring in an insidious way

for many years and, in 1956, Gaston Rebuffat observed:

'In this modern age very little remains that is real'.

This state of affairs means that most people have never experienced darkness away from street lighting, car headlights and the reflected glow of urban sprawl. The first encounter of true darkness on a hill side perhaps induces a state of irrational immobility of thought and deed that cannot be alleviated simply by the possession of torch and map. In a similar vein, the loss of visual markers in mist may induce a paralysis of reasoned action. Man is inherently a visual animal but can acclimatise to the loss of this facility with adequate exposure.

Perhaps many people are taking to the hills with no perception of the ability to continue in these adverse circumstances and find the contrast with their day to day experience too great to accommodate. If this supposition is valid there will be an ever increasing number of people who find themselves quite overwhelmed by the environment into which they have ventured. This does not bode well for a reduction in the numbers of incidents mountain rescue will be asked to resolve.

In the wake of the last piece I wrote I was delighted to be invited to attend a PDMRO meeting and to have what proved to be a very rewarding open discussion with many team members about the direction in which Mountain Rescue should travel. The offer remains open.

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NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

PLAS Y BRENNIN: SATURDAY, 7 MAY 2011

TIMETABLE & SESSIONS

10.30am: Start Main Lecture Theatre Coffee from 10.00am	Afternoon sessions Departure by 4.00pm latest
10.30-12.30 Morning sessions	
12.45-1.30 Lunch break	
1.30-3.30	

Equipment Testing, Use and Misuse

Medical Workshop

Technical Ropework and Steep Angle Rescue

Water Rescue

Vehicles and Driving

IT SARMAN and Digital Mapping

Please email Richard Prideaux on richprideaux@gmail.com or call him on 07799 031128 or 01824 703 121

IMAGES WITH THANKS: KESWICK MRT; CENTRAL BEACONS MRT; DUDDON & FURNESS MRT

NATIONAL TRAINING DAY: PLAS Y BRENNIN

Mike Margeson writes... We've had a fantastic response to this, with over 100 team members booked. The capacity for each workshop has been extended slightly to provide for demand. There are a few places still available - book soon or be disappointed! Please see key details of the day above.

Also for the diary: Media Training and Train the Trainers days at Lancs Police HQ, on Sunday, 20 November.

ROPE RESCUE GUIDELINES

The training committee recently held an additional

5.5 hour long meeting, with most regions represented, going through this document line by line - and, after two years' hard work, it's looking in good shape. I'd like to thank all those teams and individuals who have made significant contributions to the process, in particular the initial work of Bill Batson and, more recently, project leader Al Read. The final document will be put forward to the main MREW meeting in May.

I would finally like to remind all regions that the training subcommittee is happy to welcome any new members who feel they have skills and knowledge to contribute.

Who claims climbing and caving are dangerous?

Errant drivers and ourselves pose the greatest threat. Just to put it in perspective, some statistics from the coroner's figures for England and Wales, 2009:

- Homicide:** 619 deaths
- Drug abuse/dependence:** 566 deaths
- Road accidents:** 2538 deaths
- Suicide:** 3330 deaths
- Other accidents/misadventure:** 6135 deaths

The last category includes, for example, industrial accidents, accidents at home etc etc. Included in here are the 37 deaths recorded by MREW of which at least twelve were due to heart attacks.



INSURANCE MATTERS

Neil 'Woodie' Woodhead
insurance
@mountain.rescue.org.uk

The last couple of months have been quite hectic, as I've taken to the role of Insurance Officer. The two main areas have been the personal accident cover, arranged and funded by the police authorities and the liability policies, arranged and funded by MREW. But what's the difference and how do they interact? This seems to be a very confusing point for many people, and that isn't surprising.

Personal Accident (PA) cover provides team members with compensation if they are unfortunate enough to suffer an injury while engaged in one of the activities covered by the policy. There is no need to prove that someone is at fault for your injury and that is the key difference. A new PA policy, underwritten by Aviva and arranged by North Wales Police, went live on 1 March and it is hoped police authorities will sign up to this, so team members will get the same benefits wherever they are based. But more about that in the next issue.

The **Civil Liability** policy protects all mountain and cave rescue teams in England and Wales, and their members, for legal liability following injury or damage to third parties, arising in connection with demonstrations, fundraising, training and contingency cover if not working under the police or fire service. The liability protection covers you for claims against you for injury or damage caused to others. You and your assets are protected if you are sued. The policy covers you for the cost of successfully defending a claim and for damages and costs payable if you are held to be legally liable. The key here is that you must be found to be legally liable before compensation is paid to the injured person - you or your team must have acted negligently, or breached statutory duty, which has resulted in the injury or damage.

There is cover to £5m underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance and an additional £5m of cover underwritten by Novae Insurance. Full details of the cover can be found on the MREW website and you are urged to look at this to ensure you understand what is covered and what is excluded.

One area we are working hard on is to provide guidance to teams as to exactly what fundraising events are covered. MR has evolved over the years and teams are now raising funds through more innovative ways than simply

standing outside holding a collection bucket. An essential part of insurance is to ensure we disclose material facts, so that the insurers know what they are covering. It is common with many businesses and organisations that they evolve over the years and it is their duty to ensure the insurers know this. I had a very fruitful meeting with the insurance brokers back in January, when I was able to give them a current overview of MR and the activities we undertake. So if you are looking at holding a fundraising event that carries more risk, or is outside the normal fundraising we do, then please email me to ensure it can be discussed with our brokers. I'd also appreciate you letting me know of any types of fundraising that your team does, so that this can be added to a list of agreed activities.

One key point of the liability insurance is that we notify incidents to the insurers in accordance with the policy. The full Incident Notification Guidelines are in the summary of cover on the website and you should make sure you understand exactly what needs reporting. Failure to do so can result in a claim being refused. If you are involved in an incident, please contact me for assistance in reporting this to the insurers - it is much better to do this centrally and then you can be helped and guided.

In January we circulated a declaration for each team and search dog association to sign, confirming they weren't aware of any incident that could give rise to a claim against them. The response was excellent and I'm very grateful to you all for doing this - it helps greatly when renewal is being discussed and insurers are comforted to know there aren't claims out there waiting to be reported. This will become an annual requirement and I hope you will assist me again next year with completing the declaration and promptly returning it to me - it can now be found on the website. What this process did do was highlight a couple of incidents that did need to be reported and these have now been done, giving those teams protection just in case a claim is made against them at a later date - thankfully unlikely. Insurance is seen by many as a necessary evil. If you have any queries regarding different covers then please just send me an email and I'll give you what help and assistance I can.



NATIONAL MOUNTAIN AND CAVE AWARENESS DAY 2011
Date: Monday 2 May
Locally to all teams

NATIONAL TRAINING DAY
Places: 60
Date: Saturday 7 May
Location: Plas y Brenin
Contact: Mike Margeson
01229 889721
mmargeson@hotmail.com

MREW SUBCOMMITTEES AND BUSINESS MEETING
Places: 100
Date: Saturday 21 May
Location: Lancs Police HQ Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
01796 862335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

THE PRINCES' CHARITIES DAY
Hosted by PDMRO
Date: Friday 22 July
Location: Peak District

DATES 2011

* Mountain rescue Ireland invites team leaders from England and Wales to join their 'Human Aspects of Team Leadership' course in May. The aim of this residential weekend course is to provide leadership knowledge, skills and self awareness. Topics explored will include:

- Leadership styles and values
- Changing a leadership pattern
- Creating a learning team

SEARCH FIELD SKILLS
Places: 30
Date: Friday 26 August (Three days)
Location: Bangor University
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE
01248 716971
07811 041227
asgjones@cix.co.uk

SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT
Places: 30
Date: Friday 3 September (Five days)
Location: Bangor University
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE
As before

ICAR
Date: Friday 7 October
Location: Sweden

MEDICAL SEMINAR
Places: 60
Date: Saturday 5 November (One day)
Location: Charlotte Mason College

MREW SUBCOMMITTEES AND BUSINESS MEETING
Places: 100
Date: Saturday 21 May
Location: Lancs Police HQ Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
As before

- Team culture
 - Different working styles
 - Practical scenarios involving interpersonal conflict and solutions
 - Personal leadership action plans
 - Taking care of oneself as leader.
- Specifically designed for current or prospective team leaders or deputies, the course



IMRA COURSES

To book or for more info, email Mark Flynn
training@mountainrescue.ie

LEADERSHIP
Cost: €175
Date: 20-22 May
Location: Midland TBC
Contact: Pat Holland

OPS MANAGEMENT
Cost: €150
Date: 27-29 May
Location: Ben Wiskin Centre
Co Sligo
Contact: Seamus Bradley

RIGGING FOR RESCUE
Cost: €150
Date: 7-9 October
Location: Achill Island
Co Mayo
Colm Byrne

MANAGING INITIAL RESPONSE
Cost: €150
Date: 14-16 October
Location: Larch Hill
Co Dublin
Contact: Mark Flynn

PARTY LEADER
Cost: €150
Date: 4-6 November
Location: Larch Hill
Co Dublin
Contact: Ken Roberts

Mountain Rescue Ireland presents: 'Human Aspects of Emergency Team Leadership' Friday 20 May - Sunday 22 May at The Horse and Jockey Hotel, Co. Tipperary (25 candidates maximum) Contact Mary Mullins, at mary.mullins@gmail.com or +353 (0) 87 676 3842 for full details.*

presupposes learners have training and experience in delivering the technical aspects of their emergency service function at leadership level. Participants from non-mountain rescue emergency services will not require knowledge of mountain search and rescue activities to gain and contribute to the mutual development of emergency service team

leadership capability for use in both operational response and in routine team management situations. The course fee of €200 (for non-MRI members) includes training, accommodation, meals and course materials. Contact Mary Mullins for booking form - mary.mullins@gmail.com.

Use of snow chains accepted at normal policy terms for mountain rescue vehicles

Search and mountain rescue teams were kept extra busy during the winter's adverse weather conditions, responding to calls from other emergency services. During that time, James Trickett & Son (Insurances) Ltd, who currently arrange multiple insurances for over 30 search and rescue teams were approached by one of their teams, worried that the use of snow chains on their mountain rescue vehicles would be considered a modification and, therefore, affect their insurance cover.

In the bad weather, in addition to their usual callouts, many teams were also:

- Ferrying stranded motorists trapped in snow
- Transporting otherwise inaccessible patients to waiting ambulances and hospitals.

That is why...

Blue Light Cover and **Off Road Driving** are VITAL extensions to Trickett's Motor Fleet policy and are **therefore included in ALL search and mountain rescue team motor fleet policies as standard.**

● Plus, following the enquiry regarding the use of snow chains, **their insurers have now accepted use of snow chains at normal policy terms and conditions** subject to them being used on ice and snow only - at no extra cost.

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TEAM LEADERS' MEETING: FEBRUARY

David Allan

The meeting was held on 12 February as the traditional date of the first Saturday in December had been cancelled due to bad weather. This led to a discussion, particularly since this meeting was well attended, whether February was in fact a better time. A vote was overwhelmingly in favour of moving to February in the future and NEWSAR have kindly offered to host the next meeting at their base.

There was indeed a very good attendance, and it was encouraging to see an increase in the number of cave rescue teams present. Closer inspection of the attendance list, however, leads to a more disappointing figure. Only nineteen mountain rescue teams were represented – less than half of the total. At a time when criticisms of communication lines are being aired it is of concern to record such a poor turnout. Distance, of course, is a large obstacle to some teams but this far from explains the whole picture. This meeting, above all others, allows for exchange of ideas both within and without the programme and has never failed to produce new information for all those attending.

We are indebted to Steve Hilditch and Derby team for the excellent venue, easy to find (for almost everyone), good facilities and a very good lunch. This is a very brief summary of the presentations – almost all are available in full either from the presenters or through Peter Smith.

Robin Knott (PDMRO) opened the day with a brief but succinct and informative account of the structure of PDMRO.

Mark Hodgson (Keswick TL) described his team's involvement in the Braithwaite coach crash, an incident which took them into new territory with many lessons were learnt. Working on a large scale with the other emergency services reinforced the need for MR to be clearly identified, both as a whole and as lead individuals. Dealing with a large number of injured children was a new and potentially stressful situation, added to the fact that this was a local school party and therefore there was always the fear that seriously injured children might be closely related to team members.

John Hulse (Ogwen TL) gave an update on the Sarcall system, which goes from strength to strength in North Wales, valued both by MR and the police. John described some improvements and refinements to the system. It was also encouraging that it is gradually spreading to other regions, and that Scotland has expressed an interest. There would appear to be a strong case for Sarcall being deployed

across all the areas in which mountain and cave rescue operate.

Karen Frith (Penrith and SARDA) talked about 'Who rescues the rescuers?' Hard on the heels of Mark's presentation, the relevance of this subject was quite clear. As a whole, mountain rescue has been somewhat reserved about the question of support for team members after incidents. Some teams have been ahead of the whole but we have not produced a wider strategy. Karen's presentation made a very strong case for change and pointed the way to achieve this. We have asked Karen to take this further on behalf of MREW and printed guidance will soon be available.

Al Day (Calder Valley TL) pursued the concerns already raised regarding our first foray into bulk purchasing. It was generally agreed a number of mistakes had been made, especially in respect of communication. The discussion provided an opportunity for people to express their views, which was useful. At the end of the presentation it was agreed there is a financial need to continue with a policy of bulk purchasing but the process will be overhauled.

Mike Graham (Penrith) dealt with the increasingly important issues of Civil Resilience and, in particular, the involvement of mountain rescue in local resilience forums. He managed to make what could have been an uninteresting list of organisations into a very relevant account, making very clear the real necessity for MR to get involved with all aspects of the resilience agenda. The good news was the extent to which mountain rescue, at both local and national level, is being consulted rather than simply informed.

John Hulse stood in for Al Read to talk about mountain rescue involvement in the severe weather conditions that arrived in North Wales, outlining the important role MR played both out in the snow and in the control centre. This presentation illustrated well the important role Sarcall plays and also backed up the messages from the previous speaker.

Tony Jones (MREW vice-chair) gave the final presentation on leadership skills and responsibilities. When assembled in total these might be enough to deter would-be candidates. It is a tribute to all the current team leaders that they measure up to the qualities and capabilities Tony outlined. His thought for the future raised the possibility of a more organised approach to the training and appointment of team leaders.

The quality of presentations throughout was excellent and we are indebted to those who committed their time and expertise.



CATHERINE MIDDLETON AND HRH PRINCE WILLIAM OF WALES WILL BE MARRIED ON FRIDAY 29 APRIL, AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY PHOTO: © CLARENCE HOUSE

LAND ROVER 'WEDDING PRESENT'

Prince William and his bride-to-be have indicated that they would like people to consider giving to charities rather than sending direct wedding presents. In the light of this, we were delighted to learn that Land Rover is to present Mountain Rescue with a fully customised Defender to mark the Royal wedding. Where the vehicle is to be deployed was left entirely to ourselves. Accordingly the names of all teams went 'into the hat'. (With the exception of a handful, who very honestly declared they were already in possession of very new vehicles.) The draw was made by Prince Harry at the recent Princes' Charity Forum and Patterdale MRT came out of the hat. There will be a public handover in the near future once the customisation is completed. Patterdale will, in turn, donate one of their existing vehicles to another team. Any interested team should approach Patterdale directly. Mountain Rescue England and Wales will carry the cost of changing the livery on this vehicle.

MOUNTAIN SAFETY FORUM

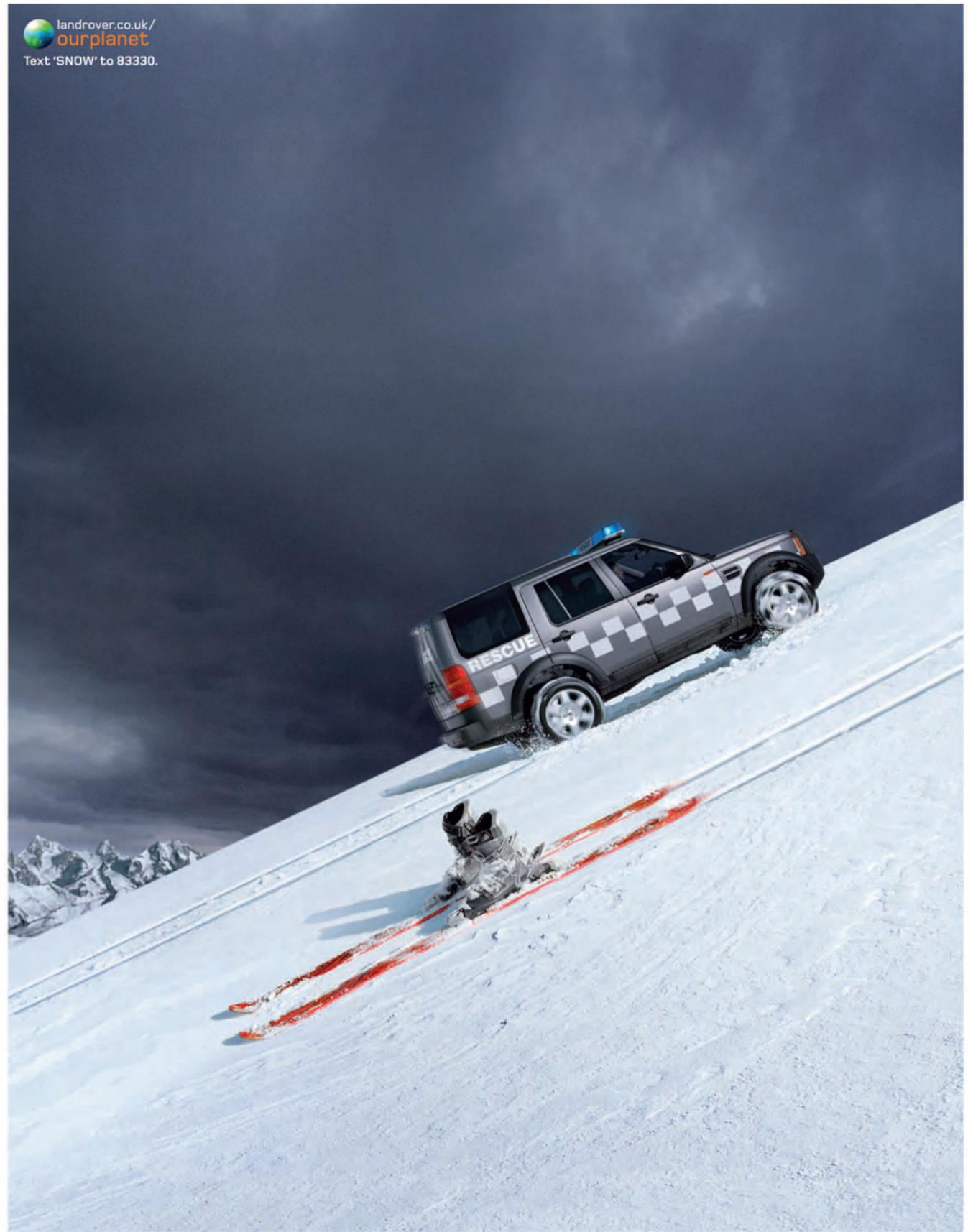
This group has held its first formal meeting. Rab Carrington, BMC president, was asked to take the chair and Jon Garside, also a BMC officer, is responsible for the administration of the meetings and the implementation of actions. Mike Margeson and David Allan represent mountain rescue, Ian Shannon attends as ACPO rep and people from Plas y Brenin and MLTB are also there.

Discussion focused on what is believed to be an avoidable 30% of incidents involving hill walkers. With this in mind the strap line of 'Hill Safe' is to be adopted. The number of instances where parties are stranded in the dark was considered and it was noted there is no mention of the time of darkness in current weather bulletins. Action will be taken to try and get this information included. Also under consideration is the possibility of encouraging all hotels, hostels and B&B accommodation to display weather information and possibly route times for adjacent hills. Establishments who do this regularly might be awarded some form of 'Hill Safe' recognition. We are to try and identify a high profile figure in the media world who may be able to give advice on how to connect with the people who venture into the hills without making use of the literature already available.

It was also noted that the use of climbing helmets appears to have declined significantly and under a parallel heading of 'Climb Safe' this will be addressed.

One of the basic tenets of this group is to ensure that all its recommendations sit comfortably within the ethos of the 'freedom of mountaineering' and do not become restrictive or proscriptive. The existence of the group working with this ethos may prevent other bodies from taking a far more judgemental stance.

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OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR THE DISCOVERY 4 RANGE IN MPG (L/100KM): URBAN 21.6 (13.1) – 25.4 (11.1) EXTRA URBAN 33.2 (8.5) – 34.9 (8.1) COMBINED 27.7 (10.2) – 30.7 (9.2) COMBINED CO₂ EMISSIONS: 244 – 270 G/KM. DRIVE RESPONSIBLY ON AND OFF ROAD.

PRINCE WILLIAM AND KATE SET UP A CHARITABLE GIFT FUND FOR THE ROYAL WEDDING

Prince William and Miss Middleton have set up a charitable gift fund for those who very generously may wish to donate to charity to help the couple celebrate their wedding.

Having been touched by the goodwill shown them since the announcement of their engagement, the couple have asked that anyone who might wish to give them a wedding gift consider giving instead to a charitable fund.

Donations can be made through royalweddingcharityfund.org which includes a full list of the charities to benefit, personally chosen by William and Kate.

Many of the charities are little known, without existing Royal Patronage, and undertake excellent work within specific communities. They are charities that have a particular resonance with the couple and reflect issues in which they have been particularly interested in their lives to date.

The charities are grouped into particular areas, depending on the work they do, and individuals can donate to the group

they particularly wish to support. The areas are: Changing Lives through Arts and Sport; Children Fulfilling Their Potential; Help and Care at Home; Support for Service Personnel and Their Families; and Conservation for Future Generations.

The charities include some based in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, to reflect the couple's close ties to and affection for the three countries following visits by Prince William in the past.

Donations, via the website, are possible in six currencies. Donations can also be made by telephone, by text message or by sending a cheque. The donations will be held in a dedicated account by the Foundation of Prince William and Prince Harry and grants will be distributed in partnership with the benefitting charities to ensure maximum impact.

The website is hosted by BT, which is also providing the online, telephone and text services as well as the processing platform for charitable donations. The site was designed and built by GGMR. All major mobile operators have waived fees for processing donations. For all the latest updates on the Royal wedding visit: officialroyalwedding2011.org.

Infrared Security Solutions: an update on your positive response to January's article

I would firstly like to thank all of the readers of 'Mountain Rescue' for the response shown to our article in the January edition. As a direct result of the article, we have been asked to provide practical demonstrations and trials to a number of search and rescue teams from Scotland to the English West Country. I would anticipate being able to share the result of those 'events' with you all via this magazine in a later edition.

It has become quite clear from conversations we have had with search and rescue professionals that there is considerable interest in not only buying

cameras such as our TIV, but also in the proposed lease/hire scheme suggested in the previous article.

Since the article, ISS has been exhibiting at IDEX in Abu Dhabi, UAE – an international show focused principally on defence matters – where we were able to show our cameras to a group of individuals involved on a daily basis with rescue scenarios in a variety of mixed and varied environments. We will also share (where permission is given) how they envisaged using our cameras and the extent of developments with them.

As many of you will have seen in the ISS literature – the latest TIV (the HDZ) is capable of 'man detection' at distances up to 2900 metres with a battery life of six to eight hours! Unsurprisingly, it was this device which attracted the most attention. However it is only one of the cameras we

offer and we will bring a variety of devices to presentations. Finally, in anticipation of us both meeting you in the near future we are attaching a photograph so that, in the event of us needing your particular skills in the interim, you will know your target! If you have any questions you would like to put to us please call Rob Reeve or Julie Haslam on 0115 845 6573.



Portable solutions for treatment and control from Marco Trailers

Marco Trailers customer base includes the police, ambulance, fire and rescue services and government agencies, looking for trailed or motorised units dedicated to their own special needs. Bespoke manufacturing capability is a long established Marco strength. Their smaller units are also hugely popular, and these 'little trailers with big impact' have now inspired the brand new MX25 motorised unit. With financial constraints facing us all, this economic and versatile vehicle is another example of Marco making things possible.

Case study: Medicare X50TC treatment and control centre

Medicare Event Medical Services Ltd is relied upon by organisations like Tottenham Hotspur FC, London Excel and Arena Leisure to provide vital, on-the-spot medical cover at major events. As a leader in the field, for whom equipment functionality and reliability is a number one priority, Medicare-EMS approached Marco Trailers to discuss a combined treatment/ control centre to meet the most stringent demands. Marco Sales Director Stuart Marsom and Medicare-EMS MD Matt McDonnell worked closely to refine the brief, from which a dedicated Marco X50TR-C trailer was developed.



With several special features, the unit provides a large treatment room housing two couches, separated by cubicle curtains. There is instant hot water from elbow taps in the preparation area, plus plenty of storage. An HX sized oxygen retainer, defibrillator and spine-board are also available. The unique design additionally incorporates a sophisticated control room (with radio communications, PCs, monitors and large screen TV), separated from the treatment area by a PIN-locked door, but also accessible from the forward personnel entrance.

The innovative treatment unit has served to complement Medicare-EMS's leading position in the event medical cover sector. According to Matt McDonnell, the impressive level of support available with the new trailer has already contributed directly to the acquisition of new business. For more information of to subscribe to the newsletter, call 01273 513718 or email info@marcotrailers.co.uk. Marco Trailers Ltd, Railway Road, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 0AP.



EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW FOR THE NORTH: 5-6 JULY 2011

Following on from the success of the annual Emergency Services Show, Emergency Scotland 2011 will provide a fresh – and more convenient opportunity – for emergency services personnel and planning officers from Scotland, the North of England, Ireland and Scandinavia to attend a dedicated exhibition. The team behind The Emergency Services Show (held at Stoneleigh Park) and The Emergency Planning Society have joined forces to provide resilience and emergency professionals with the UK's most comprehensive exhibition and symposium that will run side-by-side, under one roof. The event is being held at The SECCO Glasgow.



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than chemical or solvent-based, it's safe for home users and the environment. And WaterBased proofers are more concentrated, keeping you drier for longer for less money!



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LAKE DISTRICT

INCIDENT NUMBERS KEEP CLIMBING

Richard Warren writes... At the end of 2009 we had real concerns over the 14% increase in incidents (532 incidents) over the previous year (425 incidents). As a consequence, the region continued to invest heavily in communicating the messages of taking personal responsibility and being better prepared when venturing out on the hills. But did this work? Unfortunately, the statistics for 2010 are now in and show no improvement.

2010 returned just under 600 incidents compared to 532 in 2009 ie. a 13% increase. Incident totals have now increased 50% over the last five years. A possible explanation could lie in the increased popularity of holidays in the Lakes, increased usage of mountain rescue in resilience matters (ie. civil contingency incidents such as flood response, major traffic incidents) and severe wintry weather. This latter point is especially true where winter conditions on the mountains over recent years have been 'excellent' for winter climbing and walking, and therefore attracting increased numbers on the fells. Fortunately, fatalities have not matched the overall increase in incidents but the number of casualties requiring medical attention has kept pace, with a 50% increase over the five year period. What are we as a region doing about it? In addition to numerous public awareness initiatives over the past four years, LDSAMRA – in conjunction with Cicerone – launched the new 'How to Stay Safe and Enjoy the Fells' leaflet reported in the last issue of the magazine. During 2010, over 100,000 copies were distributed across the county. The leaflet can be found and printed from the LDSAMRA website. The aim is to help people make the right choices before going into the hills and provide information about what to do in the event of an accident and how to avoid getting lost or benighted.

After such a busy year it was great when we heard that Mo Richards of the Langdale Ambleside team had been given recognition in the New Year honours list for her contribution of over 40 years service to the team and nearly 1,300 rescues attended. An award very well deserved and our congratulations go to Mo.

POLICE UNDERWATER SPECIALISTS BRIEF EDEN RESCUE TEAMS

Patterdale MRT hosted a training meeting with representatives of the North West Police Underwater Search and Marine Unit in February, attended by members of the Penrith, Kirkby Stephen and Patterdale teams. PC Diane Owen, Community Officer for the Ullswater Ward, set up the meeting following a visit by Patterdale leadership to Cumbria Constabulary HQ.

'The more we understand how our partners work, the better,' says Patterdale leader, Martin Cotterell, 'and we found the visit really useful. Diane suggested the meeting with members of the regional underwater unit and it made sense to extend the invitation to our colleagues in neighbouring teams.'

The North West Police Underwater Search and



LEFT TO RIGHT: IAN CLEMMETS (PENRITH), ARTHUR LITTLEFAIR (KIRKBY STEPHEN), PHIL BROOKS, MARTIN COTTERELL (PATTERDALE) AND COLIN SAMUEL

Marine Unit can be called out to search anywhere between North Wales and the Scottish Border, covering the force areas of Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, Lancashire, North Wales and Cumbria. Established as a regional unit in 2000, it has fourteen members based in Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside, and the unit can handle incidents in any of the six force areas. Members dive up to 50 metres, searching for missing people, weapons, stolen goods and submerged vehicles and there have been several incidents on Ullswater in the past year where team members and police have worked together. 'Phil Brooks from Lancashire, and Colin Samuel from Greater Manchester, gave us an insight into the scope of their dive teams, how they work and the technology they have available,' says Martin, 'and, most importantly for us, they were able to give us practical advice on what we should do to make our initial searches as useful as possible.'

MID PENNINE

NELSON MANDELA SENDS HIS BEST

Bolton MRT team leader Garry Rhodes picked up his post one morning in February to find an envelope with the instruction to open with care, and not to bend, for its contents were 'fragile'. Inside was a letter from ex-team member Chris Moody explaining that waaaaay back in 1998, the team had an idea to send its newsletter 'Res-Q' to exotic locations and people, to be signed or authenticated in some way and returned. On return, said item could then be auctioned to boost team funds. Chris took up the challenge and, unbeknown to the membership, sent a copy of the May issue to none other than Nelson Mandela. Very kindly, Mandela signed the newsletter and returned it to Chris. 'By this time,' explained Chris, 'the idea had stalled and



MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE



ALL DRESSED UP WITH EVERYWHERE TO GO

On Saturday 27 November, **Bowland Pennine MRT** celebrated its 30th anniversary with a black tie dinner. Formed in 1980 by the amalgamation of South Ribble MRT and Northern Rescue Organisation, the team made great efforts to scrub up as best it could. The event, at Stanley House Hotel, Mellor, near Blackburn, saw over 80 members, partners and supporters enjoy a first class meal and disco, dancing the night away. Team members were treated to a first class display of the bagpipes by team member Andy Daniels, an ex-member of the Royal Scot Dragoon Guards regimental pipe band. Before the meal, several boards showed over 100 very old and faded pictures of those present, old equipment and events. A majority of the photos were in black and white showing team members of the day with their own teeth, hair and slimmer waistlines!!! Several newer team members required help in identifying some of the individuals. In 2012 the team will be celebrating fifty years of MR service in the mid-Pennine region, which began on the morning of the 25 March 1962 with an incident on the Bowland Fells. The death of two children from hypothermia created much media interest in the lack of a fell search capacity in the area, which was quickly addressed. By May that year the South Ribble Fell Search and Rescue Team was formed, the founding member of the MPSRO.

the auction never took place, so I kept the newsletter and attached correspondence thinking a later opportunity would arise.' It was then consigned to the 'box that was rarely opened' until this year. So now the newsletter – bearing the official seal of the Office of the President of South Africa and dated 24 August 1998 – and the accompanying letter, are to be framed and take pride of place at the team's base.

IT 'AD TO BE ASDA

Bolton MRT has secured a £10,000 donation towards team clothing courtesy of the ASDA Foundation Sponsorship Programme. Team President Tony McNally and Secretary Gillian Gregory were presented with the donation at the Astley Bridge branch of the store by Paul Baldwin, the store manager, and colleague Christine Baldwin. The money was quickly earmarked for winter salopettes, waterproof overtrousers and item of water rescue kit.

LEFT TO RIGHT: TONY MCNALLY, CHRISTINE BALDWIN, PAUL WILCOX AND GILLIAN GREGORY PHOTO: PAUL STERRITT, NEWSQUEST (BOLTON) COURTESY OF THE BOLTON NEWS

NORTH EAST

DAVE COOK LONG SERVICE AWARD

A **Cleveland SRT** member for 40 years, Dave Cook was presented with his MREW Long Service Award by chairman Sid Bollands. An ex-policeman and grandfather of six, Dave is the longest serving member of the team and, throughout his forty years of membership, he has held a range of positions including treasurer. He is currently in charge of the collection tins around the North Yorkshire moors. His contribution to the team over the years has been fantastic. Dave has no plans to hang up his boots just yet. 'Although sometimes it's hard work I enjoy putting time back into something I like doing – walking and climbing'.



ABOVE: SID BOLLANDS OF CLEVELAND SRT PRESENTS DAVE COOK WITH HIS LONG SERVICE AWARD

BELOW: NORTH OF TYNE TEAM MEMBERS CELEBRATE THEIR NEW VEHICLE



PEOPLE'S MILLIONS ENABLES MOBILE CONTROL VEHICLE NORTH OF TYNE

A £50,000 grant from the People's Millions charity has enabled **North of Tyne MRT** to buy a vital mobile control vehicle. Based on a Mercedes Sprinter, the vehicle was prepared by specialists MMB to a specification drawn up by team members and incorporating built-in features including hi-band and police Airwave radio, an on-board computer with search planning programme and map printing facilities, a separate area for carrying equipment, and the ability to carry an injured person on a stretcher.

Having such a versatile vehicle will bring great benefit to the team. Given the wide operational area, NOTMRT have never had a fixed operating base. Search control has generally been set up either in conjunction with Northumberland National Park MRT, using their now aging trailer, or in whatever barn, pub or Land Rover was convenient. Having a vehicle with all the facilities built in

MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE

(including a diesel powered heater) is a big step forward. The new vehicle was officially launched at Go Outdoors in Newcastle upon Tyne with members of the Big Lottery team invited along.

BUSY TIMES FOR TEESDALE

Teesdale & Weardale SMRT members found themselves busier than usual in February, reporting three successful searches in one week, the latest for a missing girl on the banks of the River Tees between Middleton in Teesdale and Newbiggen in County Durham. Adam Hearn, deputy leader said, 'There was a great deal of concern for this girl, who had contacted the emergency services on her mobile phone. As well as team members searching the river banks we deployed three members of our canoe group into

the water. At around 4.00pm they located the young lady at the top of a small crag about 1km west of Middleton in Teesdale. We then handed her over to the care of the ambulance service.'

During the same week, the team found a man in woodland in Durham City who had been missing for over 40 hours, and located a missing walker lost on the High Pennines.

And while we're in Teesdale, the team has written a book about their work titled 'Forty Years and Counting' which can be bought in Cotswold Outdoors in Durham City, many shops throughout the county and, of course, from the team's website www.twsmt.org.uk. Profits from the book will go towards the purchase of an additional 4x4 response vehicle.

NORTH WALES

OGWEN TEAM LEADERS JOHN HULSE AND AL READ HONOURED FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Chris Lloyd and John Hulse report... On Thursday 3 February, John Hulse and Alistair Read received their awards at a force-wide ceremony hosted by North Wales Police.

John received a Commendation from the Chief Constable of North Wales for his developing of SARCALL, ground-breaking computer software which has greatly improved the callout methods and communications for mountain rescue teams in North Wales. (John's article on the SARCALL system was published in Mountain Rescue magazine in 2010.) Since the system was adopted by North Wales Police, there has been great interest by other police forces, and mountain and cave rescue regions, as well as other professional emergency services.

Alistair Read was presented with the prestigious Royal Humane Society Award on Vellum for his part in a challenging rescue of two canoeists in late November 2009. In November 2009, **Ogwen Valley MRO** was called to assist the fire and rescue service in the rescue of four paddlers who were perilously close to being washed down the Conwy Falls near Betws y Coed. All four were out of their canoes. Two were perched on a rock close to the steep walls of the gorge and the other two were in mid-stream, holding onto an underwater rock. They were very close to the point of no return, over the falls.

John expands, 'Having failed to make the planned 'get-out' whilst on very fast, cold whitewater just before dark on the River Conwy, the canoeists realised they were just a few metres from the top of the Conwy Falls. They abandoned their boats and swam to the sides of the steep gorge where they were in an eddy with just occasional contact with the rock walls. Becoming increasingly cold in the very fast water with the ever-present danger of being swept down towards the falls, they were gradually getting weaker and moving them to safety became a top priority. 'On arrival at the incident site, Al rapidly realised the critical nature of the situation and made the decision to rig a rapid system, manned by the fire service, to get some help to the weakening canoeists as fast as possible. Being highly experienced in technical whitewater rescue, he volunteered to be lowered to the pair down the 20m+ steep, partially overhanging gorge wall to the river. At the river level, he got the first person out of the water and onto the raising system whilst he stayed with the remaining canoeist. During the final stage of the raise of the first canoeist, a boulder which was probably the size of a TV was dislodged and fell, hitting Al and knocking him into the water. Fortunately, he was held by the rope from being swept away.'

'Despite being severely injured, he continued with the rescue, only afterwards realising the seriousness of his condition – considerable soft tissue injury to the shoulder, four cracked ribs, a ruptured liver, and major nerve damage to his upper arm. He was raised to the top of the gorge, carried through the rough woodland and then to the waiting helicopter. The remaining canoeist was recovered safely from the river by another Ogwen team member and the pair were then taken to the RAF 22 Sqdn helicopter which flew all three people to hospital in Bangor.'

Alistair was later transferred to Liverpool where he spent the week in Intensive Care. John reveals that Alistair is back on the hills, partly Hill-Ops with Ogwen Valley MRO 'but is no longer doing one-armed pull-ups or his Iron Man triathlons!'

Both awards recognise the skills and commitment of the volunteers of mountain rescue teams throughout the UK who give freely to assist their fellow man (and woman). The Humane Society Testimonial on Vellum is awarded where someone has put themselves in considerable danger to save, or attempt to save, someone else. The award was presented by the Assistant Chief Constable of North Wales, Gareth Pritchard, saying Alistair had displayed 'tremendous courage during the rescue' and 'this is typical of the actions of our mountain and cave rescue volunteers in North Wales and across the country... his actions are worthy of recognition.'

MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE

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REGIONAL NEWS

PEAK DISTRICT

YOU'RE HIRED!

In February, three members of **Oldham MRT** were invited to visit Holy Trinity CE Dobcross Primary School to attend the Family Assembly Day. Once assembled, they were astounded to be presented with a huge cheque for almost £3000. Here's how this magnificent sum was raised. Six weeks earlier, each of the 170 children at the school was given just £1 and then challenged to increase it. The budding entrepreneurs came up with lots of exciting and innovative ideas, and photos and stories recording their activities could be seen on the display boards in the school hall.

Money-making schemes were wide ranging and included dog grooming, car washing, cinema lights, making bracelets, bookmarks, lots of cakes and biscuits and running a lucky numbers game. Other, more energetic pursuits, involved sponsored rides on horses and bikes, sponsored walks and swims and a football tournament.

The final sum was announced, in TV talent show style, at the very end of the assembly. Representing the team were Barry Pelmore, Peter Hyde and Matt Torr, whose two children attend the school. Peter said, 'We've seen this idea used very successfully as a team building activity for adults, but getting primary school children involved is certainly a first. We were speechless!' The two business experts who raised the most money have now been invited up to OMRT headquarters to pay a visit.



LEFT TO RIGHT: BARRY PELMORE (OMRT), MATT TORR (OMRT), PHIL RENOLDS (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS), LIZ TRAVIS (HEAD TEACHER) AND THE BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS

POSTSCRIPT FROM OLDHAM: OLDHAM WEEKEND TAKES PLACE 27-29 MAY

As you may well be aware there is a certain rather high profile wedding taking place this year, on the Friday of the traditional weekend for this event. So the team has deferred the date (well you never know – yours might be lost in the post!!). For one year only, the Oldham Weekend will take place on Spring Bank Holiday Weekend 27-29 May. Contact Tony Gillon on admin@omrt.org for further details.

NORWICH CLIMBING CLUB RAISES £950 FOR DERBY TEAM

With what seems to be a touch of irony, a climbing club from Norfolk have raised £957.50 for **Derby MRT**. Members of Norwich Climbing Club organised a fundraising climbing event at the

Sportspark indoor climbing wall at the University of East Anglia. Around 80 adult and junior climbers took part in a variety of challenges, including blind climbing, climbing in wellington boots, speed climbs, climbing without hands, and various other events. The evening raised a total of £1915, including £700 raised by the venue and its customers prior to the event, which was split equally between Derby team and the Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Ambulance. The event was organised after club member Jim Pratt suffered a fractured vertebra in a 30 foot fall whilst climbing with fellow members at Black Rocks, near Cromford. Derby team members and the air ambulance came to Jim's aid and evacuated him to

the Royal Derby Hospital, where he was kept for four days. Jim was forced to take six weeks off work as a result of his injury but has since returned to work and even begun climbing again, although he still suffers pain in his back due to the accident. The Norwich club are regular visitors to the Peak District and have supported mountain rescue in the past. A Derby team spokesman said, 'It seems strange for people from a Norfolk, a county famously lacking in hills and mountains to be supporting mountain rescue but we are enormously grateful for their support. We hope to see Jim and his friends back in the Peaks soon, though hopefully not in our professional capacity!'

SOUTH WEST

EXMOOR ANNUAL TRAINING WEEKEND

Exmoor SRT held their annual training weekend in January. Team members and trainees were joined by members of Cornwall SRT, along with trainers from Cornwall SRT, Devon CRO, Dartmoor Rescue Group, Avon & Somerset Police, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service and Jon Simons from Tracks 4 Life. The base for the weekend was The Pinkery Outdoor Education Centre on Exmoor, owned by Exmoor National Park. Team members began arriving early on Friday evening – most of them in time to participate in the first activity, a navigation skills game where members were required to find various locations in the fields and woods surrounding the centre.

Saturday saw various workshops and training sessions including cave rescue, searching swiftwater, casualty care, tracking, scenes of crime and critical incident management and steep ground rescue. Everyone was able to participate in two sessions during the day. One of the team's stalwart supporters bravely volunteered to be rescued from a nearby mine shaft and casualty carers received expert input from the region's medical officer. Others benefited from the experienced trainers dealing with critical incidents and steep ground rescue. This was the first time in several years without snow but it was a very cold and frosty day which made some sessions, especially the swiftwater searching and tracking, particularly challenging.

Sunday dawned clear and bright, perfect conditions for the day's rescue exercise involving Sea King 169 from RAF SAR based at Chivenor. The 'casualty' for the exercise was located in a steep combe on Exmoor. The helicopter ferried teams from various locations on the moor to the casualty



site, where the casualty was treated, packaged and winched into the helicopter and returned safely to the Pinkery centre. Everyone else was then flown back to the centre, providing the opportunity for additional embarking and disembarking training. Many thanks to all those who gave up their time to run workshops and training sessions – it was much appreciated by all those who attended. Julian Webb concludes, 'We hope to see all the trainers who assisted during the weekend at our opening event on Monday 2 May where we can thank them once again for all their contributions to a highly successful training weekend.'



EXMOOR TEAM'S NEW RESCUE CENTRE TO BE OPENED BY RANULPH FIENNES ON MOUNTAIN AND CAVE AWARENESS DAY

The new Rescue Centre in South Molton, Devon, will be officially opened on Monday 2 May. All MR officers and team members are invited to attend and join the celebrations from 2.00pm, with Sir Ranulph Fiennes 'doing the honours' at 3.00pm. The building was purchased a year ago and the team has been working hard since then to transform it into a base for storing vehicles and equipment and for holding meetings and training events.

Late breaking!

MID PENNINE

POPEMOBILE ARRIVES IN LANCASHIRE

Rossendale & Pendle MRT took delivery of their new 'Popemobile' in the middle of March. Funded almost entirely by a donation from the East Lancashire Mark Masons, the team decided they wanted to replace their oldest vehicle, the 'bread van', capable of carrying a full size 'cot' and which had proved indispensable for house calls during the last two hard winters assisting the ambulance service during the bad weather. Whilst it might look a bit too posh for mountain rescue, the Land Rover Discovery conversion came in at around £7000 cheaper than the equivalent Defender. The vehicle was used



successfully within five days of delivery and is proving very popular with team members keen to take it out for a 'familiarisation' drive!



FORMER ROSSENDALE, WOODHEAD AND EDALE MEMBER HELPS SET UP NEW TEAM IN SCOTLAND

Thanks to Liz Roberts at grough.co.uk for this wee story... The first new mountain rescue team to be established in Scotland for eleven years is hoping to get official recognition soon. The Stornoway-based Hebrides Search and Rescue was set up after first being mooted three years ago. Before the 18-strong team was established, mountaineers in trouble had to rely on the Coastguard, mainland volunteer teams on Skye and in Kintail, Torridon and Assynt. The RAF rescue teams from Kinloss and Leuchars also covered emergencies in the Western Isles. John Norfolk, manager of Hebrides Search and

Rescue, said, 'Some time ago the police realised there was a gap in capability with regards to land-based search and rescue.

'We experience some of the worst weather in the British Isles out here and this was also a deciding factor in forming the team.

'The Outer Hebrides are receiving lots of media attention with film crews now a regular sight on the islands: Three Men go to Scotland, Monty Hall's Hebridean Escape, Highland Emergency, Coast and Countryfile just a few examples.

'With the recent success of Dave MacLeod's Big Climb, and several new guide books, the islands have seen a sharp rise in tourism and outdoor pursuits. There is also talk of the Hebrides being promoted as the new adventure destination in the UK. This is all excellent news and may help revive the local economy, but we need the infrastructure in place to cope with emergencies.'

The team, which is now operating, and supported emergency services during severe winter weather, has applied for membership of the Mountain Rescue Council of Scotland.

Among team members are Emergency Planning Officer Tom Laverty who has served with Lochaber MRT, Steve Oliver, a veteran of the Woodhead, Edale and Rossendale MRTs and two doctors, so there is already a wealth of mountain rescue experience involved. All team members are keen climbers or walkers.

The highest peak on the Outer Hebrides is An Cliseam, or Clisham, the 799m (2,621ft) mountain on North Harris, the only Corbett in the island chain. John also spoke to MR Mag, and supplied some cracking shots of the team during training in the beautiful setting that is their home patch. He remarked that setting up a new team from scratch was quite an experience as it's so long since many of the more established teams took shape. Not many people could recall the actual process – and, in any case, these things tended to be more organic in growth in the sixties and seventies. And there's so much more emphasis now on procedures,

guidelines and legislation. So it's been an interesting three years. You can find out more about the fledgling team at their website on www.hsar.org.uk or follow them on their Facebook page at <http://tinyurl.com/43etvcv>.

SWALEDALE MRT JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE – 'EXERCISE SWALE RESCUE' SUNDAY 27 MARCH

Team: a group of interdependent people united by a common cause: Saving Lives in Wild and Remote Places.

Tim Cain writes... It has struck us for some time that there is much good work going on out there across the teams – so how can we learn from each other? Sunday, 27 March saw the second Swaledale MRT 'Rescue Challenge' event: 'Exercise Swale Rescue' in Upper Swaledale North Yorkshire, the aim of the exercise to bring together mountain rescue team members so we could share our experiences and differing approaches in a challenging and realistic set of mountain rescue scenarios.

'One of the things that came out of the day was the differences in kit and methods adopted by the different MR teams,' said one participant, from North Yorkshire Police. The exercise was open to all teams in Mountain Rescue England and Wales, who were invited to send six operational team members to take part in a 'round robin' of mountain rescue tasks. On the day, six teams were able to join us (two withdrew at short notice otherwise it would have been seven): Rossendale and Pendle, North of Tyne, Bolton, Cave Rescue Organisation, Bowland Pennine and Calder Valley MRT – a total of 48 operational team members who, combined with an excellent turnout from the home team, made a total gathering of 95 mountain and cave rescue colleagues. That's a lot of mountain (and cave)

SOUTH WEST

RICHARD THORNE RECEIVES LONG SERVICE AWARD

In February, Howard Otton, chairman of Dartmoor SRT (Plymouth) had great pleasure in presenting Richard Thorne with his forty years' Long Service award. Howard writes... 'It was an honour to present Richard with this award as he is a very well respected team member as well as being a very good friend. He has achieved something no one has ever managed before in the history of Plymouth section – a monumental forty years continuous service to the team.

'Richard has been involved in mountain rescue work since 12 January 1971. So far, he has had many roles within the team, including chairman and

treasurer, and he still is helicopter liaison officer and treasurer of the Dartmoor Rescue Group, and has now trained as a search manager through the MR course at Bangor. This is great news for the team as his vast experience can now be utilised through him joining our 'control team'.

'In his role as helicopter liaison, he has established and maintained a close and professional rapport with the Royal Navy and RAF Search and Rescue squadrons at Culdrose and Chivenor. This, in turn, has afforded us the opportunity to train more closely with them, and offer a safer and better service to the public.

'Richard has undertaken a considerable number of searches within his career, many of which have resulted in positive outcomes. Most notably he led a search team during Easter 1981 which



successfully found ten air cadets lost on Dartmoor during appalling blizzard conditions. 'I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Richard's wife Janet for all her support to both Richard and the team during his forty years service. Her selflessness and support are key factors in the work that Richard has been able to provide to us over the years.'



GROUP SHOT PHOTO: SWALEDALE MRT
WATER TRAINING PHOTO: BOLTON MRT

experience in one place. Thanks to Mike Margeson for spreading the word on the national net.

On arrival at the RV at Keld, the various teams were grouped together into five larger groups to spread experience. Each group was allocated a Swale guide who maintained communications with exercise control. The groups were further enhanced by members of North Yorkshire Police and medics from the Yorkshire Ambulance Service Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) who were quickly integrated into each group, bringing their specialist knowledge and experience.

The exercise consisted of a rotation around five

activities: steep ground, triage, crime scene awareness and micro search, confined space and bank support. These were selected from the wider set of mountain rescue team competencies in an attempt to generate discussion and showcase the various approaches and standards. The groups were allowed one hour at each activity including briefing, the activity itself and discussion on completion. They then had fifteen minutes to navigate to the next activity.

The Steep Ground activity involved the rigging and movement of a casualty on a Bell stretcher on steep ground, introducing the stake anchor commonly used by Swale. The Triage activity was a paper exercise introducing many people to the concepts of 'sieve' and 'sort' (surprisingly this was new to many people). The Bank Support activity included a wet feet crossing of the Swale using various recognised techniques like Line Astern (sadly the Swale was very low on the day so this part was largely theoretical), however, groups were able also to conduct bank support work in the 'warm zone' involving the handover of a drowning victim from swiftwater technicians to safety via a bank support team. The Confined Space activity introduced the groups to the React stretcher and its utility in extracting a casualty from a tight



What a cracking day – it was great to mix with other teams rather than remain grouped just with ourselves, to gain a wider view of different ways to approach things

MR TEAM LEADER

The benchmarking of best practice was a real eye opener

I was particularly pleased to see a crime element in the exercise

EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER NORTH YORKS POLICE

spot. Finally, the Crime Scene and Micro Search activity explored the issues involved with the scene of a crime, evidence protection and



TOP: A COLLECTION OF NEW TEAM MEMBERS POSE FOR THE CAMERAS – STEVE OLIVER IS TOP RIGHT, JOHN NORFOLK, FRONT ROW, SECOND FROM LEFT ABOVE: THE TEAM'S HOME GROUND

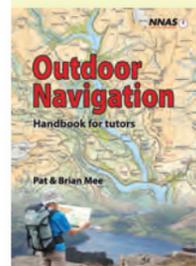
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detailed searching. The exercise was visited by Chief Superintendent Andy McMillan of North Yorkshire Police who commented, 'I was extremely impressed with the professionalism and commitment of everyone I spoke with. They maintained good humour but at the same time were very professional and efficient. They quickly got themselves organised to each task in hand and accomplished each activity safely and successfully.'

The exercise achieved its aims in full. The opportunity to learn so much from each other was fully exploited and people departed for home smiling and with lots to reflect on. The success of Swale Rescue was entirely down to the teamwork, collaboration and enthusiasm of everybody who participated from mountain and cave rescue and the statutory emergency services.

'It remains only to thank everybody for their hard work and positive attitudes and we hope to see even more teams joining us in Swaledale in 2012,' concludes Tim, who is Swaledale's training officer. Swaledale MRT (swaledalemrt.org.uk) will be running another 'Rescue Challenge' on Sunday 25 March 2012. Please put it in your team diaries. Further information and expressions of interest to Tim Cain MBE (ctimboc@aol.com).

It was an excellent day –
enjoyable, informative and challenging
and in excellent company
MR TEAM MEMBER



NNAS launch Outdoor Navigation: A Tutor's Handbook

In support of their providers and the outdoor community, The National Navigation Award Scheme (NNAS) has launched a new resource. Set to become a well thumbed and well respected resource for NNAS providers, as well as any outdoor professional involved

in tutoring land navigation skills, the book was formally launched at the Royal Institute of Navigation in Kensington, London on 2 March, and at the BMC, Manchester on 3 March.

'The handbook is recommended as a reference for all outdoor leaders who teach navigation. The innovative and practical approaches suggested should benefit students considerably by providing enjoyable and varied learning experiences.' Steve Long, Chief Executive MLT.

The NNAS is a charity and company limited by guarantee and has been in operation since 1994. The scheme was launched at the RIN by Peter Palmer, its founder, to provide the opportunity, in a non competitive environment, for people from junior school age right through to active senior age adults to have the opportunity to learn the various skills and techniques of land navigation and enable them to engage responsibly with the outdoors. It also aims to promote the satisfaction, enjoyment, confidence and challenge of safely navigating in the outdoors.

Sponsored by Harvey Maps and Recta Compasses, the NNAS seeks to achieve its aims through a network of over 330 approved course providers across the UK who provide training to those who wish to better their navigation skills. It also works alongside a number of highly respected organisations and is recognised by Mountain Leader Training and British Orienteering. Check out www.nnas.org.uk for a glimpse of the UK coverage and variety of providers. Groups and organisations that have leaders with appropriate qualifications are encouraged to utilise the NNAS programme, which is probably the most authoritative in the country.

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STUFF Book

SAFETY ON MOUNTAINS by JOHN GARSIDE

Review by
Mike Margeson



John Garside, the BMC/MLTE training officer has done an excellent job in updating this important and essential long-standing BMC publication. John has pulled together advice and assistance from a wide variety of organisations and individuals such as Dr John Ellerton (MREW), Allen Fyffe (MLTS) and Mal Creasey (MLTE). The booklet's ten chapters are well-illustrated, clear and accessible. The Harvey map examples work well, as do the illustrations from Mountain Leader Training; both of which help create the user friendly style and layout. The booklet is further enhanced by well-chosen photographic images. In my view, this is a gold mine of information and advice, full of well thought through skills and techniques to help your enjoyment of the hills, whether you are a novice or more experienced. Chapter ten finishes with an up to date appendix of contacts, information and website addresses as well as an excellent further reading list.

Safety on mountains by John Garside
BMC/MLTE. Published by the British Mountaineering Council. www.thebmc.co.uk.
ISBN: 978-0-903908-19-1. Price £6.99.

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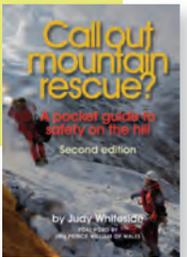
Cycling in all its forms is an activity growing in popularity, not least because of the extraordinary improvements in bike technology and design during the last twenty years. In particular, mountain biking is enjoyed by all ages, with numerous off-road trails just waiting to be explored, whilst experienced bikers can push both their skills and machines to extraordinary extremes.

The thrill of the ride can sometimes be costly, mountain bikers having some of the highest rates of injury in the hills, and while accidents are always going to happen, having good

information about what to expect on a route can help riders select the best trails. Maps alone can never show the hidden challenges of a route, which are only revealed in the mountains, sometimes with frightening, if not disastrous consequences. A well-researched guidebook is one way of minimising the risk of mishaps and the unexpected, and Cicerone have just launched the first two books in a new series of mountain biking guidebooks. Mountain biking in the Lake District describes 24 routes in the Lakes, offering some of the best MTB riding in the UK. The routes are arranged by difficulty, novices with reasonable bike-handling skills should be able to complete the blue routes, while experts should be challenged by the red and, more so,

CALL OUT MOUNTAIN RESCUE? A POCKET GUIDE TO SAFETY ON THE HILL by JUDY WHITESIDE

Review by Ed Chard



...so far so good. This pocket guide is a great resource for amateur and professional alike – full of useful tips and hints on being in the mountains and staying safe. There are the sections you'd expect in any mountain pocket guide, like how to make a call out, directing a helicopter and navigation, but there's a lot more. Removing a tick is a particularly good (sorry) section, as is mountain weather.

The book is written from a mountain rescue background and has lots of reference to planning and preparation, something often missed out in modern books.

Toward the back of the book is a great section on the history of MR teams in the UK and some top stories of days gone by. I liked the list of rescue kit to be taken out in 1932: wooden arm splints, iodine, bandages, kettle, primus stove, eiderdown, feeding cup and urine bottle. It's certainly made me think of putting my 'feeding cup' back in to my rucksack! So all in all, a great little book, under £10 and you'd be supporting Mountain Rescue England and Wales. Get one!

Call out mountain rescue? A pocket guide to safety on the hill by Judy Whiteside. Published by Mountain Rescue England and Wales.

www.mountain.rescue.org.uk.

ISBN: 978-09501765-9-8. 175 pages. Price £9.99.

ROCK TRAILS: PEAK DISTRICT. A HILLWALKER'S GUIDE TO THE GEOLOGY AND SCENERY by PAUL GANNON

Review by Mike Margeson



There seems no shortage of resources and no excuse not to be well informed of the geology and formation of our mountain landscape these days. This edition follows on from Rock Trails 'Snowdonia' and 'Lakeland'. The format is now familiar but works well. The book is divided into the 'knowledge section', explaining the formation of the Dark and White Peak, followed by fifteen walks giving the opportunity to explore the geology described. As a climber and caver it is great to find out more about the limestone formation and our wonderful gritstone edges. I particularly think the photographic illustrations work well. A great resource to dip into for Instructor or Mountain Leader.

Rock trails: Peak District. A hillwalker's guide to the geology and scenery by Paul Gannon. Published by Pesda Press. www.pesdapress.com.

ISBN: 978-1-906095-24-6. 218 pages. Price £14.95.

Milly in Training

SECOND IN A SERIES OF FOUR SHORT STORIES
BASED ON THE LIFE OF A SEARCH AND RESCUE DOG

Milly Morning



The first two years of my life were a lot of fun (mind you, I did get into a heap of trouble at times!) Not long after my departure from my home farm I started going away for one weekend a month. I wasn't too bothered about the journey to get to these new exciting places, the noise of the big lorries was really scary, but once we got to wherever we were going, I had a ball – or two (excuse the pun, I'm rather obsessed with them!)

There were lots of dogs just like me, black and white, hyperactive collies with attitude! Of course the first couple of weekends I was the centre of attention, the 'new kid on the block' and let's face it I was pretty damn cute in those days! I later began to realise that these 'training' weekends were all about something far more serious, I had started on the first rung of the ladder to becoming a search and rescue dog. To me though, it was all just a big game. As a wee pup I was encouraged to mix with all the 'grown-ups'. Some were happy to tolerate my exuberant puppy behaviour; others put me in my place pretty sharpish and I would cower away with my tail firmly tucked between my legs, ears down!

That first weekend I learnt just how much fun those Humans can be. Special Human kept hold of me tight whilst Body Gill leapt around excitedly squeaking one of those brightly coloured toys. I couldn't wait to catch her up and play. Humans are a bit sneaky though, as the weekend went on, Gill started to hide away from me, but I'm not daft... doesn't she realise I could follow her smell anywhere and it's dead easy to find her hidden behind that clump of heather?

The grown-up dogs had to work much harder. I could see them tracking the hillside above, covering what seemed like a huge area. I could hear them barking excitedly in the far distance when they found their Body. I wondered if I would be allowed to do that one day?

On the second weekend I was given my very own harness to wear; at first it felt strange, but when I saw the grown-ups wearing them when they went off to play (some would call it work) I reckoned it must be pretty cool. Mine has a large bell on it; it gets on my nerves, but hey if it makes me look important... Wearing the harness meant it was my time to play. Special Human also taught me some new words 'Away Find' meant there was a Body out there to play with and I should start searching...

As well as Special Human being super excited when I found Body Gill, she also

encouraged me to make lots of noise. I soon began to realise that the louder I barked when I found body Gill, the more reward and play I got.

Travelling to a different part of the Highlands became the routine as our training progressed. I soon began to realise that finding the Body was not going to get me the fun and games until I managed to get Special Human to the Body too. Rather a challenge at times I can tell you – you Humans are soooo slow! You know sometimes I'd be waiting fifteen minutes, perched in a strategic position on the hillside, barking loudly as Special Human laboured up the hillside towards me, sweating profusely and red in the face (what an embarrassment eh)? 'Bout time she put in a bit of fitness training I would say! It was always worth waiting for though; 'cos guaranteed as I led her into the Body, the fun and games would begin.

March 2008 arrived; I was just under two years old. The training weekend seemed to come around early this month and as Special Human drove towards Glencoe I could feel some tension in the air. We stopped at a farm where we met two of the other 'trainee' SARDA dogs my buddies – Assynt and Skye. The Humans seemed extremely tense, I couldn't imagine what was about to happen. But I needn't have worried; Special Human and I went into a pen full of those Stupid White Fluffy Things (SWFTs) and just walked around. Next we were sent out into a field and a whole herd of SWFTs shot past us in a mass panic. Now I don't want to sound superior, but SWFTs are pretty thick aren't they? As a wee pup, if ever I had even looked in the direction of a SWFT, Special Human had growled at me. Go for the easy life I say, just ignore them, it's not worth the grief. I tell you Special Human can get really angry sometimes...

Anyway, I digress, back to that trip to Glencoe; the normal two days fun and games extended into three. Special Human worked really hard to make sure I covered the search areas we were given, sometimes I found two Bodies in the same area – yippee double the fun!

I was getting quite good (modest eh?) at sniffing out those Bodies; Special Human would work me up into the wind, so any

human scent would come filtering down-wind to my finely honed sniffing machine. If the wind was right and there were no obstructions in the way, I reckon I could sniff 'em out half a kilometre away. I'd learnt to follow Special Humans hand signals too – if she held out her left arm and started heading left, that's where she wanted me to search next. A whistle would call me back to her where I was always rewarded with kind and encouraging words.

I was pretty tired by the end of the third day, but before it ended I could see Humans gathered together in small groups around the car park area bumping their gums about how things had gone. Then they all disappeared inside the Hotel. When they emerged, sometime later, Special Human had a stupid grin on her face. She came over and gave me a big cuddle then attached a new collar and badge around my neck and lead me off for a photograph. I've included the photo for you at the top of the page. Apparently, I'm now one of a highly qualified elite of 'Mountain Rescue Search Dogs'.

Watch out for Milly's next adventure in the next issue...



TOP: HEATHER AND MILLY QUALIFY
ABOVE: MILLY IN TRAINING

ONE MAN AND HIS SEARCH DOG RETIRE

After 31 years in mountain rescue, Malc Bowyer – who lives in Buxworth – is hanging up his operational boots. Malc joined the Buxton team in 1979, and served as the team's equipment officer for some years, before acquiring his first search and rescue dog Glyn. He and Glyn were graded by the Search and Rescue Dog Association in 1991 and became a fully operational search dog and handler. Malc then was being called to missing people searches not just in the Peak District but elsewhere in mainland UK, including the Lockerbie disaster.

He continued his involvement with search dogs, grading his second dog Trigg in 2001 and

in 2008, Cap became his third and present dog. He was also the SARDA area coordinator for the Peak District for some five years.

Malc served for some time with Kinder MRT, returning to the Buxton team in 2002. His invaluable service to the team was recognised recently at the team's annual general meeting, when he was awarded honorary membership for his outstanding service to mountain rescue, by his colleagues.

Malc said, 'I have attended hundreds of incidents all over England and Wales throughout my thirty-one years' service. Although now retiring from operations, I intend to continue with the training of search dogs in the Peak District, passing on my knowledge and experience gained in order to ensure that the high standards which have already been achieved, are maintained for the benefit of those we are called to assist.

'I have enjoyed over thirty years in mountain rescue, worked with some fantastic colleagues,



and last, but not least, had the privilege of training and working with three wonderful search and rescue dogs, which are part of my family.'

Neil Carruthers, Buxton team leader said, 'I have known Malc for many years and his contribution to the Buxton team and to SARDA has been enormous. We shall miss his humour on a shout. I am delighted the team recognised Malc with the honorary membership award – he has fully deserved it.'

BOOK WILL OPEN NEW CHAPTER ON SEARCH AND RESCUE DOGS

Scottish mountain rescue veteran Bob Sharp, working alongside mountain rescue colleagues Bill Jennison and Judy Whiteside, is set to celebrate half a century of search and rescue dogs with the publication of a new book.

Bob and Bill are busy compiling the first detailed account of these exceptional animals and their handlers, tracing the seeds of the organisation we know today – from cave paintings to the Pyramids; the Swiss Alps to war-torn London; from the first search and rescue dog association to the present day. 'I've seen search and rescue dogs at work many times over the years,' says Bob, 'and you can't fail to be impressed when you see them in action. It seems extraordinary that the unique contribution dog teams make to the search and rescue effort in the UK

has never been fully explored.'

The search and rescue dog service was founded in 1965 by renowned Scottish mountaineer Hamish MacInnes, following a visit to an avalanche training course in Switzerland. Today's SARDA dogs provide vital assistance to mountain rescue, the police and RAF teams.

It's been a two-year labour of love, collecting a wealth of material from contributors across Scotland, England and Wales. Men like John Easton, a former countryside ranger from Aberdeenshire, whose first collie, Cranna, helped him hunt for bodies after the Lockerbie disaster. Her equally gifted successors were Bran and Sicoe – one of a litter of puppies born on the Hebridean island of Taransay during filming for the BBC's Castaway. Despite being blind in one eye, Sicoe proved a remarkable search dog until his retirement last year, in one case even picking up on the scent of an injured climber lying a quarter of a mile away under a foot and a half of snow.

And, of course, the book wouldn't be complete without



© DAVID ALLAN

'That's very kind of you but could you just go and tell them where I am...'

the story of Hamish MacInnes himself, and his drive to bring Alpine search and rescue techniques, using air-scenting dogs, back home to Scotland.

Bob has been a member of the Lomond team for 33 years, including a long spell as team leader, and has held a variety of roles within the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland. His partner in writing is Bill Jennison, a fellow Lomond member who started his mountain rescue career many moons ago, south of the Border, with the then Rossendale Fell Rescue team. He has now been involved with SARDA for more than thirty years as a handler, trainer and assessor. Judy Whiteside, who edits this magazine, is involved on the 'finishing touches', as editor and designer.

Do you have a story to tell?

In the tradition of Bob and Judy's first collaboration, 'Mountain Rescue', this new book will carry many an anecdote, this time from those who are, or have been, involved with search and rescue dogs – be it as a handler, body, casualty or long-suffering partner!

If you have personal memories of search dogs – in particular anyone who owes their life to the animals' extraordinary skills, instinct and training – and would be happy to see yourself in print, then please share your story. Send it to Bob at lomondbob.t21@btinternet.com or email Judy at the usual address: editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

We'll keep you posted on progress – watch this space for publication dates!



KENNY MACKENZIE WITH FRAN, SANDY SEABROOK WITH RORY, WILLIE ELLIOT WITH CORRIE, AND CATHERINE MACINNES WITH TIKI AND RANGI © HAMISH MACINNES.



SARLOC

Russ Hore Ogwen Valley MRO

We've probably all been there. You get a phone call from somebody out on the hill: 'I am lost.' With the ever-increasing use of smartphones I felt there must be a way for the user's phone to tell us where they are. The following gives an overview of the system currently under test.

I assume we are all aware of Steve Fletcher's work on feeding the location data from MR personnel phones in to MRMap. This undeniably works perfectly where we have access to the phone to install Steve's application. I was looking for a way we would not need to install anything on the 'phone.

Most modern web browsers are now able to query the device they are running on, be it a phone or a computer, and obtain its location as Latitude/Longitude. Normally the user of the device will have to give their permission for any applications to read its location. For example, on an iPhone a small dialogue pops up allowing the user to deny or permit access to its location.

With help from Rob Brookes and Dave Binks, I have been testing a system that seems to be providing good results, with certain caveats, which I will mention later.

So how does it work? What I needed to do was get the user to use their phone to browse to a web page which would query the phone for its location. The code then needs to share this location with the MR team and display the phones location on a map.

The URL the 'user' needs to browse to is <http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc.php?MYID=identifier> where **identifier** is a unique identifier.

The next release of MRMap will display the reported location but to achieve this, the **identifier** needs to be one of the team's spare radio IDs taken from mrmmap.ini. Check with Dave Binks if you are unsure which IDs to use but, at the moment, we advise using the last numbers in your block. So, for example, within Ogwen we would use 19070 or 19071.

Therefore, the URL would be <http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc.php?MYID=19071>

I suggest that teams store these URLs on a phone and if they receive a call from a lost person they can send an SMS straight back with the pre-prepared URL. The caller can then just click on the URL and this should browse to the web page.

If the user's phone is internet capable they should see a screen like the following whilst the web page attempts to obtain the phone's location:

Getting location. If location not show in 30 seconds please try again.

Tested on:

iPhone 3GS

iPhone 3G

iPhone 4.0

Blackberry Storm

HTC Desire HD (Android 2.2)

Samsung Galaxy S

If it works on another phone please let me know

As of 15 February it didn't work on

Nokia N95

Nokia N97

Nokia 3720

Nokia 2037

Some Blackberrys

Sony Ericsson C903

Samsung D900i (Pay as you go, very limited internet)

An unidentified Samsung

If the web page can obtain a location from the device the page should change to show something like:

*SARLOC© Russ Hore
Timestamp: 1299015959259
OS Grid Ref: TQ005591
Latitude: 51o 19' 0.316"
Longitude: 0o 33' 0.369"
Accuracy (m): 33
Altitude (m): 0
Altitude Accuracy (m): 0
Heading (degrees): 0
Speed (m/s): 0
TAG: 19071
Tested on
iPhone 3GS
iPhone 3G*

If the user sees this screen, then their location has been uploaded to a database on the web, which is used to display the location on a map. This would be protected by a password known only to authorised people but can currently be viewed at http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc_reports.php

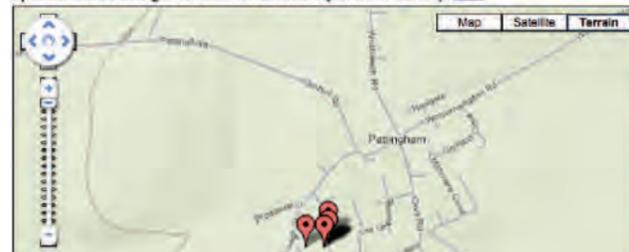
This page shows a map on the left and all the reports received so far on the right.

The system is still under development and needs you to test it in your area, with different types of phones, and to provide feedback to me at russ@russ-hore.co.uk.

Russ Hore has been a member of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation for almost twenty years, and served as chairman for two years. He is the IT Coordinator for NWMRA and, with much help from Dave Binks and Rob Brookes, he introduced MRMap and GPS enabled radios to NWMRA in 2006. Russ's other projects include MRMap for the web - see http://www.russ-hore.co.uk/mrmap_for_web

SARLOC - © 2011 - Russ Hore

Add a MYID parameter at the end of URL or I will regularly delete readings without a TAG whilst testing
At the end of the locate_me.php you need to add ?MYID=your name
Open the tabs on the right and click on the accuracy to centre the map. [Stats](#)



Accuracy	Time	Date
Accuracy: 33m	18:56:26	Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m	18:56:07	Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m	18:55:57	Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m	18:51:05	Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m	18:48:16	Sat 26th 11

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Diary of an Editor

Luddite at Large *Loosely translated as: The Things I Do For Mountain Rescue*



Random ramblings: Sometime in March...

Saturday: Mmm... Coast to Coast planning continues apace: variety of commercial sponsors on board; B&Bs booked; press releases out; Sir Chris Bonington (that's SIR CHRIS BONINGTON!!!) set to join us for a day on 4 May; friends, relatives, business colleagues, window cleaner, man-who-mows-the-lawn, paperboy (basically anyone I know who has the cheek to talk to me these days) ...every last one pressed to sign on the dotted line for cash. Some still being worked on. All we need now is some means of letting everyone know what we're up to en route. Damn, might have to go shopping!

Sunday: Apple shop, Trafford Centre. So... tell me about these iPads. Okay... do you want 16 gig, 32 gig or 64 gig? Ditto 3G... 16 gig, 32 gig or 64 gig? O2, Orange or Vodafone? Monthly contract? Top-up-as-you-go? 200MB over 24 hours, 15GB over 30 days or 30MB over 30 days? Or d'you want to queue round the block with the other saddos from 4.00am next Friday for iPad?? Two cameras (front and rear facing), FaceTime, USB slot, leave it on your desk at night and it comes alive as you sleep, empties the dishwasher, does the ironing, sets the table for breakfast and, if you download this app here, it'll even plump the cushions... oh, for pity's sake! I JUST want to BLOG!

And what about the operating system requirements? Will it work with mine? Well, that depends which operating system you're on, Madam. That'll be OSX10.4. Pause. So, you're still on Tiger then? (Okay, feeling REALLY guilty now, for not emptying the contents of my bank account into Steve Jobs's pocket on a more regular basis.) You keep your computer for THREE years without upgrading the SYSTEM? Does our hype mean nothing to you? (To be fair to the delightful young 'Genius' at the Apple shop, he didn't say this - they're actually impeccably trained and very helpful. Just taking a teensy bit of artistic license here. Indulge me.) Well, no then, you DO need the latest version of iTunes - and that's OSX10.6-compatible only. Right, so what you're telling me is this... if I want an iPad, I have to upgrade my operating system, which means half the software I have won't work anymore without also upgrading that, and then some of it just won't work at all, because 'software drift' will have rendered it obsolete, and my still-only-twelve-months-old printers and scanner might not work, so I'll have to replace them too...? Er... yep.

Thirty minutes later. Leave Apple shop. 16 gig 3G iPad, sexy black cover, and camera converter kit in very stylish Apple carrier bag. Oh, and new MacBook Pro... it's got the right operating system and everything! (Damn the expense! And at least this way I get to keep the status quo with my positively 'ancient' iMac...)

Monday: Loving this iPad. There's an app for everything. Spend all day and most of night trawling for interesting 'free' apps (and a few I have to pay for) downloading them, then realising my life is not really overly enhanced by an animated hungry giraffe, or bubblewrap popping simulator (keep track of all the bubbles you've popped with little red badges!!) and deleting them.

Tuesday: Set up blog on laptop - <http://twirliesontour.blogspot.com>. Check ability to update blog on iPad on the hoof. Download Friendly

for Facebook to iPad (more user-friendly than standard Facebook app which just replicates iPhone app). Check ability to update on the hoof. Download justgiving app for Facebook so can post chatty messages and share with my 'friends'. Check ability to link to Facebook et al from blog so can share even longer chatty messages with 'friends'. Update justgiving page with offline donations. Link to blog. Check ability to update justgiving on iPad on the hoof. Download weather app and bookmark MWIS site on iPad. Check ability to access en route.

Brrring! (Text message - keep up!) Daz the Dog Handler. Why don't you have a word with ViewRanger, get the Coast to Coast mapping for the iPad? Groan... did he not read my last diary? And quite how am I meant to walk with an iPad carried before me like a tea tray?

Afternoon: Against better judgement, email ViewRanger.

Wednesday: Apparently all the mapping for the Coast to Coast is now available for my download. Wow! Full set of instructions included. Gosh, this is easy... maps jump magically via wifi from laptop to iPad. Now all I need is to register an account, set up a password and enter the license number. What could possibly be hard about that?

Very late that night: Paper maps currently looking VERY enticing. Dependable. You know where you are with paper maps (in a manner of speaking). License number not recognised. Serial number not recognised. User name not recognised. Password not recognised. Return to website. Ah... 'Authenticate here'. Second license number arrives. Nope... license not recognised. Serial number not... think you get the picture. Not that any of this, I feel I can confidently say, is down to any inadequacies on the part of ViewRanger, only those on Planet Jude. Fire confused email off to Man at ViewRanger and drag self away from laptop by what's left of hair. Resist temptation to take iPad to bed in search of apps.

Even later that night. Well, early hours of the morning actually: Remember haven't updated blog today. Stagger downstairs for laptop, carry it up to bed and spend next hour composing post before slumping into internet-induced stupor.

Thursday: Brrring! Brrring! Very Patient Man at ViewRanger on phone. Twice. Third license number supplied. Second set of instructions delivered. Oh, now I get it... quite simple after all, then.

Update blog. Update justgiving. Update Facebook. Cross link blog to Facebook, Facebook to justgiving and justgiving to blog.

Ditto above every day since. In between hassling friends, family and business colleagues. And earning a living.

Tuesday. One week later: Who'd've thought it? Sun shining, boots on, map in hand, iPad in rucksack, checking out the start of the Coast to Coast at St Bees, a tiny pair of digital footsteps tracking my every move. Blow me but it works! (Sorry ViewRanger, that should read 'Blow me, but I managed to work with it!') Ha!! Maybe not such a Luddite after all.

Now... if I set up Buddy Beacon, everyone I know will also be able to track my every move, apparently. Add it to the to-do list. Update blog. Update justgiving. Update Facebook. Cross link blog to Facebook, Facebook to justgiving, justgiving to blog...

Later that evening: Impressing Secret Boyfriend with newfound technological deftness. At least I think that was an 'impressed' face. Gently reminds me I AM actually meant to be on holiday during this two week coast to coast amble. Mustn't let the fundraising and potential media presence be the driving force of the fortnight - you know, up at seven: meet journalist here; finish at four: photocall there; reload dictaphone for celebrity mountaineer interview; whip out notebook here, blog there; point camera here, download and send images there... Think he's got a point. Must make sure I remember that, once I've updated that blog...

Judy W, Editor xx



What's on Offer

Thanks to the sponsors, suppliers and manufacturers who support us.



Introducing the Maglite XL50

Following the success of the revolutionary XL100, Maglite have followed up with the XL50. The Maglite XL50 LED is a stripped down version of the XL100 with the same sleek machined aluminium casing and push-button tail cap switch. The XL50 gives you an upgraded LED with a more powerful beam emitting 104 lumens with a 145m range.

The XL50 has three modes accessible through quick clicks of the push button:
1 quick click - High power - Turn off with a single click
2 quick clicks - 25% power - Turn off with a single click
3 quick clicks - Emergency strobe - Turn off with a single click
The compact, pocket size design of the XL50 makes it easy to carry and store. The LED beam is adjustable from spot to flood and the machined aluminium case has been anodized for corrosion resistance and durability.

Technical info:

- Length: 119 mm
- Barrel Diameter: 25mm
- Head Diameter: 25mm Weight with batteries: 104g
- Powered by 3 x AAA batteries

For more information about Maglite products, go to www.maglite.com. For your nearest stockist information please contact Burton McCall on 0116 2344622.



XL50™

LED FLASHLIGHT

ViewRanger offers a cost effective solution to improving team navigation and logistics

Following the completion of a deal between Mountain Rescue and ViewRanger, in December 2010, it is now even easier for teams to deploy the ViewRanger GPS smartphone-based mapping, tracking, navigation and location sharing solution. This means that almost half of all teams in England and Wales are now using ViewRanger, either on a stand-alone basis or, as a complement to other radio based solutions. Teams in Scotland and Ireland are also benefiting. Teams are recognising the ease and convenience of deploying ViewRanger, by virtue of the fact it runs on a wide range of widely held smartphones (Symbian, Android and Apple), and offers detailed OS mapping, route planning and navigation. Commenting on their experience with ViewRanger, Kevin Knowles (Radio Officer, Kendal MSRT) said, 'We are finding the more we use ViewRanger the more we like it. Having just used it extensively in the Cairngorms during winter training we are impressed by the accuracy achieved, ease of use and its ability to supplement and reinforce more traditional navigation techniques. 'Not everyone in the team has a personal GPS enabled with a mapping facility, but all of us have and use mobile phones, so the addition of ViewRanger to team members with compatible phones is a very cost effective way of enhancing our ability to operate in poor conditions, especially when working away from our home area with other teams'. Additionally, ViewRanger BuddyBeacon lets teams share and view real-time location both with team members in the field (requires mobile coverage) and control centre based search coordinators. Responding to requests from users, ViewRanger's development team have been busy creating interfaces to allow cross-platform integration and hence better team communication.

'For instance, working with the MRMap* development team, ViewRanger have developed a solution to bring together BuddyBeacon and MRMap, so the real-time location of team members with either system can be viewed on a single screen by the team coordinator or on a ViewRanger enabled smartphone. The new system will be trialled by some Lake District teams and then made available to all mountain rescue teams going forward.'

*See www.MRMap.org.uk to find out more.

ViewRanger's VSAR programme provides software and mapping for compatible devices for accredited search and rescue teams. To find out more go to www.viewranger.com/SAR or email craig@viewranger.com - telephone 01223 421355.



For a full range of suppliers and sponsors go to the members area of mountain.rescue.org.uk.



Sponsorship news

Supporting Mountain Rescue

The Record-Breaking LONGEST CLIMB Everest the Hard Way



OUCH!! TOM'S HANDS

to climb,' says Tom, 'and it seemed appropriate that his memory and his life should be celebrated in this way.'

Before the climb, Tom said, 'Imagine climbing 3000 flights of stairs, and then imagine you have to do it using your arms. The competition between us is great. I'm stronger than Jonny, but he's fitter, so it's anyone's race. We are not rich or famous, but we are lucky enough to be healthy and if we can use this to make a difference, then that's great!'

Their rigorous schedule of cycling, rowing and strength training combined with hour upon hour on the climbing wall has now paid off. They knew this was going to be tough, a test of resource and willpower as much as physical strength and prowess, but they are happy that they have been able to use their strength to raise so much money for the charities they support.

For Jonny, the climb was a real test of endurance. 'By the time it was over, both my hands and my feet were bleeding,' he said. 'I've never felt pain like this in my life, it feels great to have done something no-one has ever done before but I'm so glad I never have to do this again!'

In rising to this challenge, Tom and Jonny have raised over £2,000 for Mountain Rescue England and Wales, and the climb is dedicated to the memory of Rupert Rosedale, who was tragically killed in an avalanche on Ben Nevis in December 2009.

'He was an amazing man, who taught me how

Twirlies on Tour: Update

Things continue to move on at speed. We've added to our sponsor list since the last issue, with ViewRanger joining the fun with their fantastic provision of digital mapping for the iPad which will allow us to plot routes, track our progress, and report back to anyone who wants to listen with how far we've travelled, how high we've climbed and, quite probably, how knackered we are! I've tested it on the hill and it works a treat, so thank you to them.

SealSkinz (who we met up with at the Outdoor Show) have sent us a pair of waterproof socks each - which we're rather hoping will act as a lucky charm and keep the sun shining! - and I've bought a new pair of Alberg boots - the first pair of walking boots, I'm ashamed to admit, I've been properly measured for! Jon at Whalley Warm and Dry is a font of information and takes oodles of time to make sure everything is absolutely bob-on. So far so good with the boots on the hill. And he'll be pleased to hear I'm lovingly lubricating them with the recommended polish, exactly as directed!

Victorinox have given us one of their rucksacks, filled with goodies, to raffle - both Gail and I have a book of tickets, so if you see us, stop us and buy one! Only a quid a ticket and every ticket sold will help top up the pot. Lots of people have added links to their respective sites and social networking pages and there's been a steady stream of generosity on justgiving and the hard copy sponsor forms - up to an appropriate £999 as I write. Not bad, considering my original target was a mere £500!

Our date of departure (2 May) looms fast - just hope we're ready for the challenge! If ever there was an incentive to get to the gym at the end of a tough day, or pull on the walking boots even when it's raining, then this is it! And to the mischievous wag who suggested our efforts to raise some money for mountain rescue were being funded by an expenses-paid trip - er, no. We fancied a holiday, fancied a challenge, fancied using the opportunity to raise the mountain rescue profile and a few bob at the same time but, believe me, the credit card is taking a bashing! So wish us luck and, if you'd like to throw some money our way, you can donate at justgiving.com/twirliesontour, or follow our travels at <http://twirliesontour.blogspot.com>. JW



TOP: THE EVEREST TEAM
MIDDLE: CLIMBING THROUGH THE NIGHT
ABOVE: ASCENDING INTO THE BUILDING STORM CLOUDS!!

At 05.29, on 12 March, after thirteen hours and 25 minutes, Tom Lancaster successfully completed his 1,210th ascent of a 24ft wall, taking him to a cumulative height of 29,040ft (8,851m) and making him the fastest, and first, person to climb the height of Mount Everest (29,029ft/8,848m) on an artificial climbing wall.

When climbing buddy Jonny Briggs completed the distance at 07.41, he went on to make one further ascent to set his own world record for the furthest distance climbed (29,064ft/ 8,856m).

At the end of a gruelling head to head race through the night, in the presence of official

Subscribe to Mountain Rescue Magazine

by joining Basecamp. Single membership is £24 per year (minimum), joint membership £42 (minimum). In return you will receive a lapel or cloth badge, a car sticker and a copy of the mag each quarter.

For more information go to www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/basecamp or fill in this form and send to Neil and Loraine Roden at White Cottage, 9 Main Road, Grindleford, Hope Valley S32 2JN.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Mobile _____

Email _____



Our Inspiration

April 2010. Big Sur. What an amazing place! We'd been driving down from Sonoma, California for three days through dramatic seascapes and scenic byways. Bertha, our rented VW Westfalia, was pootling down Route 1 towards the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Over the last few years Noam and I have had a myriad of 'Big Trip' ideas; Pole to Pole by bicycle, kayaking the Mekong river or travelling the Silk Road, but they've come to nothing as we wanted to be more free, less tied to a route for a route's sake.

It was while cruising down Route 1, that we saw possibly the most amazing view. Huge crashing azure waves contrasted by blazing orange meadow flowers and a log shaped like a seat; a perfect place for a lunch break. Idyllic. As we sat admiring the scenery we stumbled on the idea of doing a worldwide journey with a camper or a truck. We loved the freedom of the Westfalia: we didn't have to just take backpacker routes and could get to all the tucked away places tourists don't usually go. Bertha made us self sufficient; we could sleep in her, cook in her, bathe in her and she even had a little fridge. We had a plan.

Preparation

Back in Hertfordshire we mulled over our idea. We soon realised that, to be able to see if around the

world in a camper was possible, we needed to decide on a rough route. After much research into border crossings, FCO advisories and documentation we would need, we decided to move east. From the UK we'll head through Eastern Europe, Turkey, across the Black Sea to Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Siberia. Our first section of the route - planned!

Our route threw up a major problem. Off-road driving in a fragile camper is both a bone-breaking and a car-breaking idea: nothing we fancy. We therefore needed the proper vehicle for the undertaking. We searched for a 4x4 Westfalia, off road campervans and modified motor homes to no avail. So we decided to compromise on the car rather than on the road, realising our priority had to be capability over comfort. Living rough, we believe, is yet another aspect of having fun. So we bought a Land Rover Discovery 3 and named it Boudica.

We've modified Boudica, our new home, to fit to our needs: installed a sleeping platform, kitchen kit, roof rack with a ladder, diff guard and a safe compartment for all the music we'll need. Simple.

We have a route and a car, but I've made this all sound too easy.

Planning

We've had other things to consider too. Our route

Our Journey ROUND THE WORLD For Mountain Rescue

Jen and Noam Ben Tzion

takes us into many remote areas without infrastructure or help if needed. Most countries aren't as lucky as Britain to have their very own mountain rescue teams if something goes wrong. We needed to be prepared to acquire a number of skills.

I went to Hereford for a week, undertaking an Ex-Med course in medicine in remote areas (MIRA2). It was an amazing course; I can now treat minor wounds, suture, diagnose common illnesses, administer some prescription drugs, treat snake bites, open airways and have learned about altitude and diving related problems. Phew!

Noam has been taking care of the mechanics for Boudica, learning how to fix common problems and which spare parts to take. At first he seemed a bit lost under the bonnet but now he's learnt all the tricks and built an amazing sleeping platform and storage area.

Bureaucracy - Britain wouldn't be Britain without it. I truly believe there are more rules about taking a vehicle abroad than there are tax laws. I have been very lucky to have Paul Gowen from the RAC (a big thank you to him) to guide me through the minefield of carnet de passages, the

timing of MOT and tax renewals, and temporary export documents. Beware: it's not for the faint hearted. Ten weeks to go. We still need to fly Ganesha, our wonderful but not a big on cars cat, to family in Vermont. We need to quit our jobs, pack up our house and say our goodbyes. Oh yes, and without a doubt, there are more forms to fill in.

About Us

So now you know what we're doing, I'll tell you a bit about us.

Noam is a director in a software firm in the City of London. He's ex-army, a part-time musician and loves travelling and exploring.

I've specialised in South East Asian Culture and Anthropology over the years and now work as a teacher. I practise yoga and vegetarianism.

When we get the chance, we can always be found in the outdoors; climbing, scrambling, hiking, diving, mountain biking or horse riding. And we love it all!

We joined Hertfordshire Mountaineering Club in 2007. Yes; we do have a club in Hertfordshire and correct; we do not have mountains here. Since then many weekends have been spent having fun (and getting wet) in Snowdonia,

the Peak District and the Lakes.

We met backpacking in 2003 in the north of Thailand, in what was then a tiny village set up for trekkers. From there we've moved internationally and travelled extensively; from trekking the Huayhuash to horse riding the Sierra Nevada. Travelling was always our main hobby and shortly, in ten weeks time, our lifestyle too. Exciting!

When we decided to do this journey we realised we'd created a great opportunity to raise money for charity. After much deliberation, we were certain on Mountain Rescue: it makes sense. We've been BMC members through the Hertfordshire Mountaineering club for years and happily gain information about bothies and climbing walls. But what really sealed the deal was the excellent care and response our friend received after an accident on Tryfan. We hope to raise enough money through this expedition for Mountain Rescue to kit out three people in a team or buy 20 comprehensive medical kits: about £6000 in total. (So go on and donate!) You can follow us and donate at landroveroverland.co.uk

Supporting Mountain Rescue

Outdoor Show BIRMINGHAM NEC

Just when you think you've got it sorted! Display material: check; highly talented and totally charismatic crag display team (and stand 'staff', of course): check; bang up to date, hot-off-the-press marketing material: check; branded merchandise: check; raffle prizes: check. Yes, JUST when you think your exhibiting persona is slicker than a slick thing could possibly be, in comes that spanner! Or, as Andy Simpson so succinctly summed it up, 'We've done it again Jude.' What's that, then? I ask. 'We've managed to look poor.'

Over the years, we've learned from each show and adapted our offering for the following year, investing in display material and branded merchandise, developing a crag display team, demonstrating equipment and vehicles,

rapidly adjust our plans to suit the circumstances.

Last year a zipwire, set up by the organisers, raised a few bob in the buckets for us. So this year, we thought we'd do it ourselves. Plans were studied, stand space agreed,

risk assessments made, emails exchanged – everything was going fine. Until an actual visit to the NEC revealed the proposed line of the zipwire ran right through a rather large concrete column! Interesting. For a fleeting moment, a plan was floated for a Tyrolean Traverse instead, but the ceiling was too low and we didn't fancy taking out punters as we shot across the hall. So it was back to the stretcher demo...

Then, when we arrived, minus our big curvy display stand (because we didn't think there'd be room for that as well as the vehicle and the rope system, not to mention the tables required for selling books and stuff and signing up Basecamp members), we discovered the organisers had given us a stand space twice as big as the one agreed. Room enough for another vehicle, a swiftwater rescue display (if only we'd brought it) AND the big curvy display stand, still sitting in storage back in Yorkshire!

So, out went the plans, in



RICH WITH SMALL PERSON

giving talks. And as each new show comes along, somehow everything we planned the previous year flies out the window as we



ABOVE: 'THE A TEAM' (WELL SOME OF THEM ANYWAY) CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ANDY SIMPSON, CRAIG PALMER, SIMON HODGSON, RICH WARNE, 'RANGER' ROY HENDERSON, DEREK TUNSTALL, GAIL TODD, JON STEVENS, KEVIN PENNELLS AND ADAM 'LEGOLAS' MILLWARD. PHOTOS: JUDY WHITESIDE.



came the 'back of a fag packet', as we shuffled our now meagre offering round this enormous floor space in a vain attempt to appear we'd planned it that way.

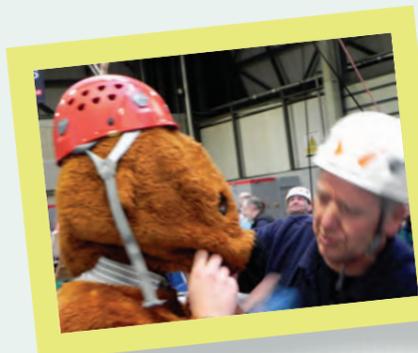
But, in the event, we needn't have worried. A couple of stretcher demos into Friday and it became apparent our audience was far more interested in getting the kids entertained. (And who could blame them, the price of a family ticket.) So we spent the weekend hoisting and lowering an assortment of young people (some smaller than their teddies), reluctant mums and dads, 'extreme readers' (half-term, school

project, apparently), one tiny Thai masseuse (don't ask!), two chaps in bear suits, and each other.

Sales of merchandise were slow, although the new thermal mugs, license disc holders, and 'write anywhere' pens went well. Not as much money to count this year but it was, without doubt, a good PR

exercise and a great opportunity for members of different teams to work together.

This year's display team, coordinated again by Roy Henderson of Keswick



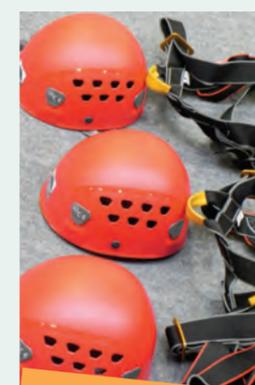
ABOVE LEFT: WHERE'S THE BEAR? ABOVE RIGHT: THANKS TO GEORGE FISHER, WHO PROVIDED DUMMIES FOR THE STAND

MRT, comprised Roy and fellow Keswick deputy Simon Hodgson; Jon Stevens and Craig Palmer (Penrith); Adam 'Legolas' Millward and Kevin Pennells (Kendal); Derek Tunstall (Cockermouth); and Paul Renwick and Rich Warne (Teesdale & Weardale). Andy Simpson, Gail Todd, John Parish, Alan George, Gary Anderson and yours truly manned the rest of the stand, with Bill Whitehouse and Pete Allright representing cave rescue. Thanks to all for three days' hard work.

Mike Bonner was the raffle winner – hopefully he's already enjoying his Victorinox rucksack full of goodies.

So, what about next year? Well, the show needs to appeal more to walkers, climbers and mountaineers of all levels. The range of exhibitors was sadly lacking this year (unless you were in the market for a tent, or a pair of dayglo, seamless pants!) with many of the usual suspects absent. We'll keep you posted on our own plans but, in the meantime, thanks to all those who popped along to say hello and throw some money in the boxes – it was good to see you! JW

BELOW: HELMETS AND HARNESSES IN EVER DIMINISHING SIZES; LEGOLAS AND TEDDY WITH JACK



TACKLING THE WELSH 3000s IN UNDER 24 HOURS

Education author and teacher, Mike Hughes, and his nephew James, will celebrate this being Mike's fiftieth birthday year by attempt the Welsh 3000s in under 24 hours on 31 May. And the pair will use this opportunity to raise money for Mountain Rescue England and Wales.

The Welsh 3000s are the fifteen peaks in Wales that reach a height of over 3,000 feet. They are grouped together in Snowdonia, beginning at Snowdon and ending at Foel Fras, 27 miles to the north – more than 13,000 feet of ascent.

'It's a challenge I've longed wanted to tackle but for various reasons never managed to fit in. The landmark of my fiftieth birthday is the perfect opportunity to tick a very big box and raise some money for mountain rescue. I've done many sponsored events over the years, and supported many a charity but this is the first time I have actually organised an event of this nature. Our aim was to raise £1,000 but we've already raised over £750 and are optimistic of exceeding this amount.' For full details: www.mikeat50.com. Or to donate: www.justgiving.com/mikeat50.



MIKE (RIGHT) WITH JAMES AT ADAM AND EVE

New Buff High UV range for summer

With summer sports and warmer weather come the need for protection from harmful UV rays. As specialists in multifunctional headwear for the outdoor enthusiast, Buff has the perfect solution with their High UV Protection Range designed to keep the wearer cool and protected. And this spring, the range has grown with even more designs. They're fun and versatile, and provide at least 95% protection from UV rays for the head and neck.

A seamless tubular garment, the High UV Protection Buff is made using Coolmax® Extreme which provides faster wicking and moisture absorption and improved comfort. Simply by twisting, turning or tying it into a pirate, saharaine, foulard or scarf, it can provide sun protection to the face, head and neck. RRP £14.

The Visor Buff comes with the addition of a neoprene peak to better shade the eyes in bright sunshine. It can be worn in a multitude of ways with the additional advantage of being able to 'flip up' the neoprene peak – perfect for use playing summer sports or taking photographs. RRP £18.

Visor Buff Evo2 is quite unique – ultra-light and fully reversible, with a neoprene peak and a drawstring at the rear, it perfectly fits the head whilst offering a greater level of comfort and sun protection than traditional caps. Made with a double layer of Coolmax Extreme, it offers excellent moisture transpiration with at least 98% protection from UV rays. RRP £20.

The Headband Buff also features a double layer of Coolmax Extreme – perfect for running and adventure sports. Available in 20 stunning designs it makes the ideal running partner. RRP £11.

Buff Multifunctional Headwear can be found at all good outdoor retailers or online at buffwear.co.uk or check out the 'How to wear' demo video at buffwear.co.uk/link-to-videos.htm



DOG BUFF PRIZE DRAW WINNERS...

Finally, we have five lucky winners... Lindsay from Buffera Ltd picked the five names out of a hat and five lovely dog buffs should already be winging their way out to their new owners – Steve Penny, Mike Williamson, Philip Amies, Deborah Bond and Ray McCutcheon. Hope your doggie friends enjoy their new neckgear!

Facebook fan count: 1418

Some of the stories that got you chatting last quarter...

...tragic news in March with the death of Mark Weir, the often controversial character behind the development of Honister Slate Mines as a thriving tourist attraction. Members of Cockermouth and Keswick teams were called out late in the evening to search for Weir, finding his crashed helicopter in the early hours of the morning. An experienced pilot, he regularly commuted between his home and work in his own four seater helicopter.

...then there was the amazing chap who fell 1000 feet from a Scottish mountain in January, and did more than just survive. When the RAF Sea King crew found him, he was standing at the foot of the crag, studying his map! Adam Potter met his rescuers under less trying circumstances in February when he visited their Ayrshire base to thank the crew personally.

...Swaledale team member, Richard Hey, was praised by police in February, for using his skills at the scene of a motorway crash. He'd been travelling on the A1(M) in West Yorkshire, when a van crossed from the northbound carriageway, landing on its roof on top of a car travelling south. Richard assessed the injuries of the drivers and passengers at the scene and put his first aid skills to work in treating the casualties. He received a commendation from Chief Superintendent Chris Hardner for his efforts.

...and two Oggie team members – John Hulce and Al Read – also received awards for their contributions to mountain rescue, in Al's case, having sustained serious injury himself during a rescue. And John received justifiable recognition for his SARCALL system, fast being adopted across the country, by mountain rescue regions and emergency services alike.

Keep watching the Basecamp page and keep those comments coming! JW

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DON'T FORGET MOUNTAIN AND CAVE AWARENESS DAY MONDAY 2 MAY!

Winter training with the Ochils team



Andy Cloquet

Most Scottish MR teams' training programmes run a range of personal, winter skills events. The Ochils MRT (Central Scotland) takes advantage of winter's irregular blanketing and rapid melting on our local hills with an additional core item of training of a set-piece weekend in Lochaber.



MAIN PIC: DAVE M, TOPPING OUT AND LOOKING CHUFFED
ABOVE: LAST TO EXIT FROM PINNACLE DESCENDING LEDGE ROUTE

As an MIC, I can run much of this and, with a recently qualified MIC alongside, a handful of Winter MLs and solidly experienced team members, we deliver a hugely varied and often adventurous programme – especially when we link up with Mick Tighe of Nevis Guides.

We've had some real soakings, including an early hours retreat from a high spot between Aonachs Mor and Beag. On that occasion, melting igloos and a rapidly rising avalanche

threat demanded precision and tiring night nav off the plateau in forceful winds, followed by a tortuous descent of the World Cup MTB trail.

We've also had our limited share of excellent weather, too, including a blue skies day of ice climbing beneath Creag Meagie in one of its remoter corries. This year would take a place equal to 'excellent' or 'superb' on a quality scale.

I dare say that a few pics could say more than I would wish to write and you could bother to read here, so if you select 'Lochaber.Feb.11' from the following link, you'll get the gist of this year's training event. <http://picasaweb.google.com/108746321748639792673>.

The similes plastered across their owner's face topping out on East Ridge, North Buttress – Stob Ban and the loose powdery exit on The Ben's No. 3 Gully underline how much confidence members have acquired from these dedicated skills sessions.

Each of the days was accompanied by unexpected 'real-time' rescue work. On the Saturday, the call went out for us to help in the rescue of a fallen casualty under Carn Dearg.



So, those climbing above the Garadh Corrie had first to abseil their route then pick a route under the west flank of Tower Ridge above the mini-gorge; before being pipped to the post, so to speak, by a helo which quickly removed said casualty and accompanying Lochaber team members. Our guys proudly left the hill the traditional way on Shanks's pony.

Meanwhile, my enthusiastic gang of five soon lost any initial trepidation about tackling a grim ridge. Likewise my confidence in being able to manage two climbing teams was fully justified as they made tremendous speed on Stob Ban; making few errors and excellent decision-making to keep two ropes of three and two climbers moving throughout the climb.

Sunday's work on The Ben, was underpinned by the plan to assist in the search for a walker who had been missing for some days. Tasked to focus on the recommended walkers' route off the top of the plateau, passing new cairns close to McLean's Steep and down towards the S side of Coire na h-Uchaire, we mixed training with accessing our allotted search patches via a couple of routes high above the North Face corries.



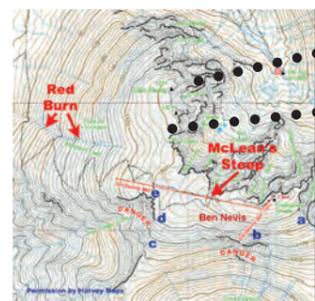
ABOVE TOP: MICK'S LEAD ON EXIT PITCH (GRIM) FROM NORTH GULLY MID SHOT: CHUFFED FACE!
ABOVE: DESCENDING LEDGE ROUTE

For those who don't climb much, being led on the steeper ground is frequently a highlight but navigation for any hillwalker, let alone mountain rescue personnel, is critical so what better training ground than the Ben?

As many of you will know, once on the plateau, the ground is bounded on its south west by the notorious, natural and seemingly magnetic top of Five Finger Gully. Over-compensation, by drifting too north of the ideal line unwittingly draws folk onto the often vast cornices lacing the rim above North Face. No need for any artificial orienteering course here, then. And each training activity confirmed for folk what can be achieved with practice.

That same weekend, members who couldn't commit a full weekend away were entertained by a team stalwart who delivered a selection of main and back road driving sessions in our Land Rover.

The Ochils maybe a small team in the bigger cog of UK mountain rescue but I think we punch well above our weight in our variety and depth of training.



MICK'S GROUP'S DESCENT OF LEDGE ROUTE WAS A VERY COMPETENT EXERCISE IN MOUNTAINEERING...

... AS WAS THEIR CLIMB OUT OF NORTH GULLY (LEFT HAND FINISH @ GR III) BEFORE HAND

SO, TOO WAS MY GROUP'S NAV IN 1M VISIBILITY, ACROSS THE PLATEAU AND BACK, TO WITHIN TEN PACES OF THE TOP OF NO. 4 GULLY (SEE IMAGE LEFT, FACING PAGE)

Ochils MRT was established in 1971 and is now based in their St John's funded post in Fishcross; with fabulous views towards our main hill area. OMRT are this year's host for the Central Scotland MR teams' joint exercise in early December. Andy Cloquet is currently OMRT training coordinator and a practising MIC and is available to complement your training programme. Please phone 07788967353 to talk over your training needs.

Climate change: true or false?

CORNICE ON AONACH MOR
PHOTO: RACHAEL HINCHLIFE



Geoff Monk
Mountain Weather
Information Service

It was a privilege to present a workshop on mountain weather at the AMI AGM in January. One area of interest, for several people, was the weather over the last two winters, specifically the exceptional snowfall on most mountain areas. So, does this indicate a change in our climate?

By far the most common weather pattern throughout the year, particularly across northern Britain is for generally westerly winds to bring in bands of rain (sometimes snow on higher areas in the winter) interspersed by showers. But with the winds blowing in off the Atlantic, temperature levels are fairly consistent; up to a few degrees above the general Atlantic sea temperature in summer, and a few degrees below in winter, with rare exceptions tending to be where the air has changed direction before coming in from the west. The sea temperatures west of the British Isles might vary from typically 8 or 9°C in late winter to 15 or 16°C in late summer.

However, there are periods, historically most frequently in late winter and spring, when the normal flow off the Atlantic is blocked over substantial periods of time, from several weeks to sometimes several months. Essentially, the wind blows from any direction but west. In winter this leads to a 'step' change downward in temperature levels, as winds from any direction but west tend to bring in either cold air directly from the Arctic, or from the cold European Continent. Thus, during these periods, snow falling tends to lie and melt only slowly if at all. It's a little more complicated in summer, when northerly winds will still bring in coldish conditions, but east or southerly winds typically bring in summer heatwaves – the high temperatures sometimes reaching the far north of Scotland, when either very close to an area of high pressure, or when southeasterly winds are blowing along the 'spine' of Britain.

So is the fact that we have had two seasons with extensive blocking significant? Here are some dates: summers that I can remember with extensive blocking are 1968, 1975, 1976, 1983, 1990 and 1999. Among the blocked

winters are 1963, 1982, 1985, 1986, 1995, 2010, 2011 (although focused on December 2010). Note in the lists that we do have one or two consecutive events. For example, the memorably hot summer of 1975 was followed by an even hotter winter in 1976. Similarly, there were consecutive cold winters in 1985 and 1986. In the light of these figures, I leave it to the reader to dream about the prospects of another snowy winter next year!

Finally, 'blocking' and 'blocking highs' are words that are banded about, but what do they really mean? A simple explanation is that in the atmosphere there is a broad (jet) stream of air that advances from west to east between the poles and the equator. Just as a river crossing a broad beach (before reaching the sea) may hug one bank, flow through the middle, split into several channels or meander considerably, so in the atmosphere the air is constrained between the banks (polar and equatorial areas), but may flow relatively straight, meander or split into several flows. Normally, with fairly straight flows of air, southwest or westerly winds reach down to the surface (on the southern side of low pressure areas), bringing Atlantic air to Britain; whilst within meanders or splits in the flow, winds tend to blow from other directions, mainly because, within the meanders, there are either semi-permanent areas of high or low pressure at our latitude. Interestingly, through the early months of 2010, as the position of the meanders varied, Britain went through periods of both persistently low and high pressure, but both scenarios resulted in sustained cold.

This article first appeared in *The AMI Magazine*. For more information about MWIS go to www.mwis.org.uk



A different way to fundraise

Paul Taylor Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group

At the base of a small cliff on the West Bank of the River Wye, below Cheston racecourse, is the entrance to a cave known as Otter Hole. This was first entered by caver Dave Sparky Parker in the early part of the 1970s, when he visited the site accompanied by two local men George Gardiner and Cyril Fitzpatrick. Although these two were not cavers their interest in the site as a 'cold store', due to the strong draught that emerged was very helpful for their 'out of hours activities' down on the banks of the River Wye. (I will leave it to your imagination as to what this entailed.)

Gaining a few metres of cave passage, Dave was also very impressed by the draught, and little did he know what was going to unfold or that he would be back forty years later, involved in a project that would raise a large sum of money for the Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group (GCRG).

The whole story of the work that followed from that initial visit is too long to tell in this limited report. However, by 1974 Dave had been joined by other cavers/diggers

Making it not only the longest cave in the Forest of Dean caving area at the time, but its vast collection of stalagmites and stalactites were unparalleled in any other cave within the UK. In fact, they're unequalled in quantity to this day and, as such, a Mecca for cavers from within the UK and around the world.

By 1984, when Dave made his last trip into the cave for a number of personal reasons, he had not visited the area of the cave where the vast proportion of these formations were located and, to be honest, it seemed very unlikely he ever would.

Fast forward to September 2009...

...and a meeting between Dave and his long standing caving friend Paul Taylor and Dave suddenly came out with the question, 'What do you think about a trip for me into Otter Hole to see the formations. You know I've never seen them?'

To be honest this was something Paul had wanted to do with Dave for many years and he was only too pleased to sort it out. However, this was not something the two could undertake on their own.

At this point, it's worth noting that any trip into Otter Hole is a serious undertaking. Mud, water, the tidal sump and many hours of caving. It is not something to be taken lightly. Add to this that Dave would be over 73 years old by the time the trip could take place. This was going to be a significant event.

Fast forward again to Saturday 22 May 2010...

...and the caving team of nine,

put together by Paul, met at 08.00hrs in the Wynd Cliff forestry car park just outside the village of St Arvans, with Dave and Paul having already taken part in a live phone interview to BBC Radio Gloucester en route to the meet.

Fortunately, in the months preceding the trip, Paul had realised this event would not only be of interest to the media but that it should also be recorded on film. It wasn't something that was going to be repeated every weekend.

So, with formalities over and gear checked, the party headed into the cave armed with a total of six cameras and a vast array of sound and lighting equipment. It was 09.30 hrs when Dave entered the cave himself.

Added to all the filming gear were supplies of food, spare clothes, first aid kit and a small shelter and, of course, everybody's personal items. Fortunately, only the food was required but contingency plans need to be made just in case an accident occurred.

Various sections of the cave, including the famous Tidal Sump, were filmed en route and then the party reached the point that had been Dave's limit of past exploration. He set off up a rather narrow and tortuous section of cave passage linking the Lower Streamway section of the cave to the Upper Series, where the bulk of the formations are located.

Once in this Upper Series, the passage size increases significantly and the formations abound in all shapes, sizes and colours. At times, Dave was very quiet, contained in his own thoughts. Reaching the Hall of Thirty (so named as it contains thirty large stalactites and

stalagmites) the film crew filmed from a distance, leaving Dave to savour on his own the first sight for him of this magnificent collection.

Although the cave extends well beyond this point, containing many more formations, Dave had achieved a major goal and decided it was time to start the long haul back to the entrance.

At 22.00hrs, twelve and a half hours since he had entered the cave, Dave re-emerged into a blaze of film lights and greetings from an assembled group of his friends. Once all the rest of the party were out of the cave, a bottle of champagne was opened and Dave's success toasted.

Then it was back up the hill to the car park and a meeting with another old caving friend, Paul Hayward, before heading back to Gloucester for a curry and more celebrations, eventually retiring to bed at 03.30hrs.

Five hours later and Dave and Paul were up watching the 'rushes' from the previous days filming. Not a bad effort for a 73 year old!

Fast forward again to 11 October 2010...

...and after many hundreds of hours of editing work and the world premiere of the new Otter Hole film was to be shown in the Palace Cinema, Cinderford... stretch limos, red carpet, champagne reception, film crew, paparazzi... all the works.

Dave and the team were joined by 160 fellow cavers, along with members of his family and the general public, for the first showing of the film to anybody other than Paul who, somewhat nervously, welcomed everybody



FACING PAGE: DAVE SPARKY PARKER, HALL OF THIRTY, OTTER HOLE CAVE
ABOVE: DAVE AND PAUL HALL LEFT: DAVE AND PAUL OUTSIDE THE PALACE CINEMA, OCTOBER 2010

and introduced the film.

The applause and shouts of support at the end gave a good indication it had been well received and, as the evening was to be raising money for the GCRG, a second film showing the group members in action was also shown. For everybody it was an evening that will be remembered for ever and, of course, it could not pass off without another curry.

A second showing of the film took place in November when a further 80 people came to see it. Due to the generosity of the cinema owners, Andrew Lougher and Karen Buckley, (themselves both cavers and members of the GCRG), the proceeds from the ticket sales were given to the GCRG raising almost £1000.

Back in 2003, a major rescue took place in Otter Hole when a female caver, who was in the cave as part of a filming party, slipped around 1.5m and sustained a suspected fractured pelvis. Her rescue and recovery back to the surface involved 140 rescuers from, not only the Gloucestershire team, but the then West Brecon Cave Rescue Team (now the South and Mid Wales CRT), Midland Cave Rescue Organisation, Severn Auxiliary Rescue Association, the police, fire and rescue, and an air ambulance. And it lasted 24 hours.

Much of that journey back to the surface involved a semi-articulated stretcher, provided by WBCRT, and manufactured by Jopling Rescue Equipment, and since then this particular item has been on the wish list of the team's equipment officer.

With this injection of money into the funds it was decided it should be used

to grant that wish and purchase a new SLIX 50 stretcher.

Added to this was a chance discussion during a car journey to attend the Mountain Rescue November meeting, and a subsequent discussion with Richard Terrell, MREW Equipment Officer, that resulted in a 50% grant from MREW towards the cost of the new stretcher.

The committee and membership of GCRG are very grateful for this support, as this has enabled them to put a larger sum of money into their other project to replace their ageing underground comms equipment with the latest generation of 'France Phones'. So, not only a happy equipment officer but a happy communications officer as well!

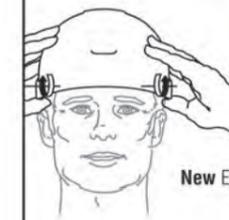
The film has gone on to finish third in a film festival held in Napoli, Italy and is also available on DVD if you would like to experience the trip without the mud. Contact paultaylor@redhousefod.co.uk for details.

The GCRG would like to send their sincere thanks to: everybody who attended the film nights; Andy and Karen at the Palace Cinema; The Underground Team - Steve Tomalin, Gareth Jones, John Elliott, Mike Clayton, Jo Clarke, Jill Brunson; the video camera operators - Nicky Bayley, Gary Cullen and Paul Taylor; the surface team - Glenys Elliott, Ian Standing, Di Standing, Daniel Jones, Rose Taylor, Paul Hayward; and, of course, not withstanding Dave Sparky Parker for all his efforts and hard work. Without him, none of it would have been possible.

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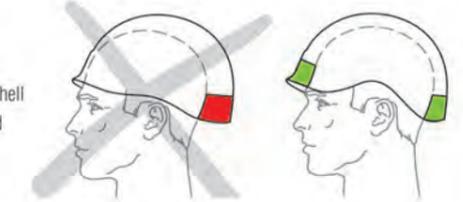
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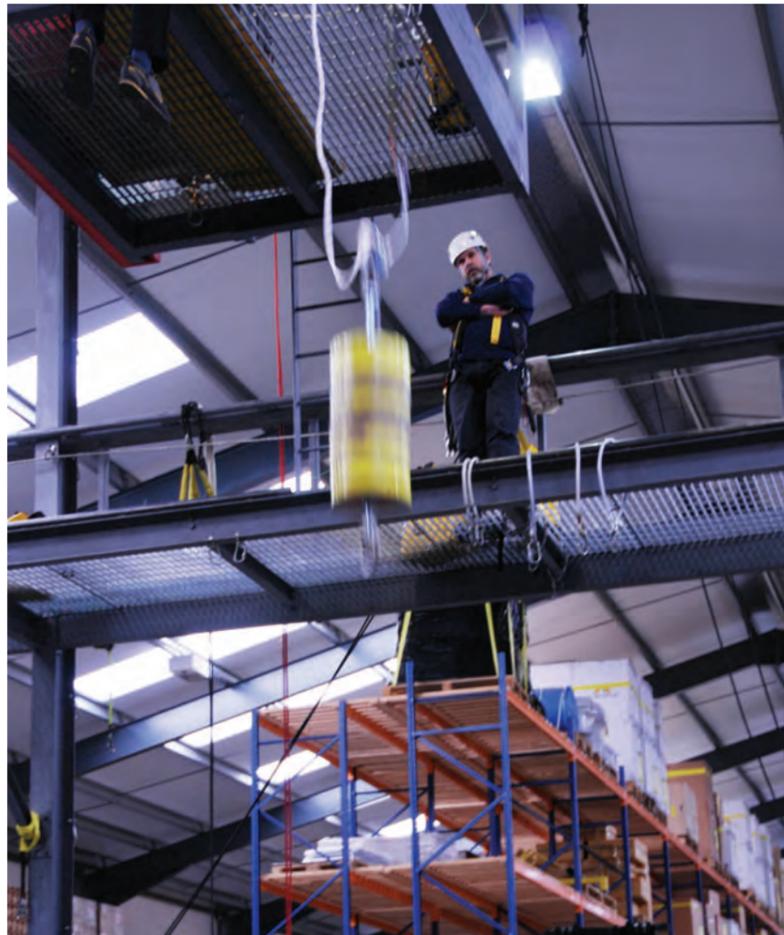
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Belay competence testing

Chris Onions **Ogwen Valley MRO**

Members of Ogwen Valley MRO recently visited Lyon Equipment at their Work and Rescue facility at Tebay in Cumbria to evaluate the performance of their prussik belay cordage. The testing was a recommendation made by Kirk Mauthner during an external audit of OVMRO's rope rescue capability, a process which proved to be highly beneficial as a top to toe review of training and operational levels, right down to how equipment could be better packaged.



DROP: KEVIN DE SILVA OBSERVES THE RIGID TEST MASS IN FLIGHT

The team had established a working party to address the findings, specifically to evaluate the performance of the chosen Mammut 8mm accessory cord when used as a rescue prussik belay with Singing Rock 10.5mm low stretch kernmantel rope. Lyon were approached to do the testing as they have an excellent testing and certification pedigree and are familiar with the challenges that mountain rescue teams face when evaluating the performance of their rope rescue systems. Some team members had observed that new Mammut cordage was shiny and stiff and were

sceptical about their ability to catch a rescue-sized load.

The performance criteria had already been established by the British Columbia Council for Technical Rescue (BCCTR) in the 1980s, who proposed that for a rescue belay to be competent; it should arrest a 200kg load free falling 1m with an initial rope length of 3m (fall factor 0.3).

This 200kg load represents two people (80 kg each) plus equipment, and the drop height with the amount of rope in service represents the fall the barrowboy and casualty would take

should a mainline failure occur while negotiating the edge at the top lowering station. This scenario, sometimes described as the 'worst case event' represents a severe fall as the load is considerable, and there is little rope available to absorb the energy from the fall. The peak force experienced by the system should be less than 15 kN, and the stopping distance should be less than 1m. If that is not challenging enough, the BCCTR also stated that the system should be releasable post drop, and the residual strength of the rope after the belay capture event should be 80% of the specified value. Rescue belay prussiks are not releasable, post capture event, so must be used in series with a suitable releasable system such as the Radium Release Hitch. The hitch's designer was said to be contemplating such issues during a bathe at Radium Hot Springs in British Columbia which resulted in the design of the hitch with the same name. It consists of a Munter hitch and a 3:1 simple MA system tied with 10m of 8mm low stretch kernmantel cordage. It will produce approximately 3m of operator-controlled extension while holding a 200kg load.

On arrival at Lyon, we were warmly welcomed by Bill Batson who had arrived early at work to setup the test site. Our delay on the M56 had cut into our schedule, and we would have our work cut out to complete the necessary drop tests. We noticed that extra padding and packing crates had been positioned strategically underneath the drop test site, which only added to the feeling of apprehension about the performance of the prussiks.

We had previously agreed with Bill to test our current, unused Mammut prussiks; our retired worn and fuzzy Mammut Prussiks and an alternative Beal cord that Lyon would supply. The other consideration was the different colours of the parent Singing Rock rope, so we would test white and red samples of brand new rope fresh from the reel.

Bill needed to confirm some technical points about the test procedure before giving us a health and safety briefing and issuing PPE to

▶ page34

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everyone who was to go up to the platform. The team had specific roles which included measuring, photography, videoing and archiving the drop samples.

After being set onto the parent rope, each prussik loop was clipped to the lower karabiner of the Radium Release Hitch (RRH) and the triple wrap prussik hitch shaped into orderly coils. It was made sufficiently snug so they could support the weight of the rope that hung down to the test mass, while being loose enough that rope could rapidly be drawn through the hitch, just like in a real belaying operation. One person set all of the prussik hitches to reduce any variation in coil snugness and a new Radium Release Hitch was installed between the prussik belay and the load cell for each drop.

Bill carefully positioned the test mass using a winch to ensure the required 1m freefall of the load, confirmation was taken that the load cell was functioning and the recording equipment was set accordingly. Team members and Lyon technicians watched at ground level as Bill took a knife to the sacrificial cord that held the test mass.

In an instant, the prussiks had cinched down on the rope bringing the load to a halt. The process could almost be described as underwhelming, such was the controlled nature of the event. Bill placed a mark on the rope where the rope had been arrested by the prussiks, and lowered the winch rope to take the load of the test mass from the rope. The sample was removed from the load cell and passed to the ground team for subsequent residual strength testing, archiving and slip distance measuring. A palpable sigh of relief was detected from the Ogwen members observing below that the first drop had been a success.

After the first drop, a slick routine was established and the team was able to complete twelve drops, including all of the variables we had specified, and replicating each one twice.

The findings

- All the drop tests resulted in the prussik combination arresting the test mass

- The range of slipping distances of the rope through the prussiks was 13-34cm
- The highest arresting force recorded was 11.25kN.

Residual strength:

Lyon Technician, Mark Davies took brand new samples of our rope that had not been drop tested to establish a knotted breaking strength and found this to be 22.8kN (red rope) and 21.5kN (white rope). These samples were used to compare the samples that had been drop tested and already arrested the 200kg mass.

The lowest residual rope strength recorded from the drop-tested samples was 21kN.

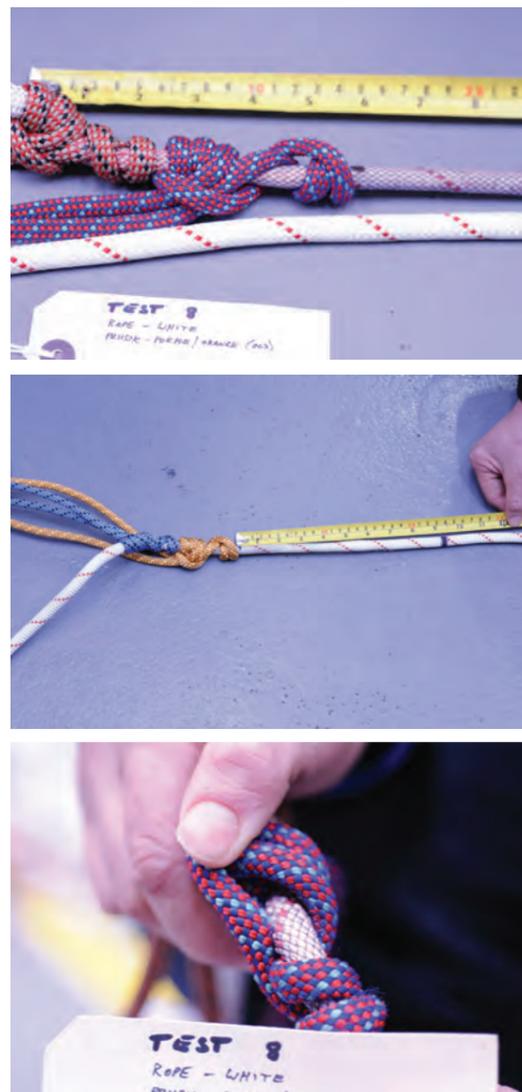
So what have we achieved?

We returned to North Wales with an increased confidence in our chosen rope and cordage combination. We have an emerging evidence-set that indicates that our rescue-belay works, and that the residual strength of the belay line is strong enough to continue with the operation post drop. We are however keen to point out that this is in no way presented as a definitive description of how prussik-belays work, as the data set is very small (only two repetitions of each prussik/parent rope combination). Teams are therefore encouraged to evaluate their own systems and conduct testing accordingly.

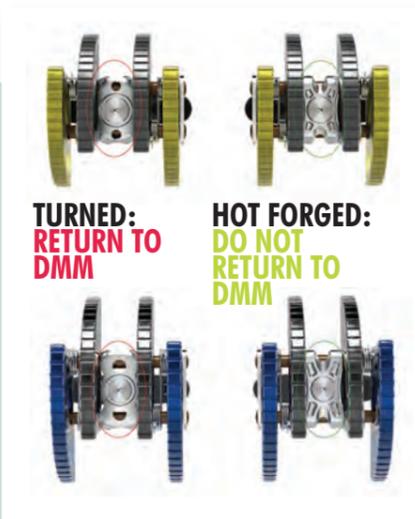
The day was hugely beneficial to us but inevitably has raised other questions and other lines of enquiry related to the performance of muddy and frozen ropes.

We are very grateful to our supporters who assisted us with making the day a reality. Thanks are extended to Bill, Paul, Pete and Mark at Lyon Equipment, and to Rescue 3 (UK) who loaned us a minibus and gave us the fuel to get ourselves to the venue. We are also grateful to North Wales Police who loaned us video and camera equipment to record the day.

Mountain rescue teams are welcome to a copy of the full data set on request.



FROM TOP:
GLAZING: THE DISCOLOURATION FROM THE GLAZED PRUSSIKS CAN CLEARLY BE SEEN ON THE WHITE PARENT ROPE
MEASURING: THE DISTANCE THE PRUSSIKS TOOK TO ARREST THE LOAD IS MEASURED FROM THE START POINT (MARKED)
MELTED: THE PRUSSIKS ARE WELDED TO THE PARENT ROPE POST DROP



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QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2010

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/10/2010 to 31/12/2010. 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.

Thursday 3 February: A stormy night rescue on Coniston Old Man



Caroline Langdon Coniston
Mike Margeson Duddon and Furness

At 16.50 an assistant leader of Coniston MRT received a call from one of the team members who was having a pint in a local inn. The landlady of the inn had become worried about her barman who had left to climb Coniston Old Man earlier in the day with two of his friends and the inn's dog.

She had rung his mobile and found he was up on the Old Man ridge in thick mist and a strengthening wind. Having spoken to the party, the assistant leader contacted the team leader who subsequently called the police to initiate a full call out at 17.00. The party were known to be inexperienced hill walkers and, although fairly well equipped in terms of clothing and carrying whistles, a map and compass, they had no torches and could not navigate. They were also unsure of their position and had descended on steep ground below the ridge and then made their way back up, in an effort to reach the summit of the Old Man where they had been at 2.30 earlier that afternoon.

Members of Coniston team were deployed at several access points to the ridge in order to search the area between the Old Man summit and Levers Hawse (the intended descent route of the party). As soon as team members started to ascend, it became very obvious that the strengthening wind would make progress slow and difficult, together with the poor visibility which in places was a little as three metres. The decision was made to call the Duddon and Furness team to help search from Seathwaite Tarn up to the ridge, in case the party had dropped down on the western side of the ridge. Radio communication was very difficult, hampered by bad reception, gusting winds and heavy rain showers.

All parties found that the force of the wind was not only hampering progress but, in some cases, preventing movement in the intended search areas. A party, deployed to search Goats Water and Goats Hawse, were unable to reach the col due to the

wind. They progressed for some time in 'off road fashion' on hands and knees before returning along the route they had come. A party on the summit of the Old Man of Coniston were blown off their feet and rolled along the summit at every attempt to proceed along the ridge. They eventually retreated to the descent route crawling along the ground and holding onto rocks on the ridge. As they descended through the slate slag heaps, they heard a sound like a waterfall above the sound of the wind. It soon became clear that it was the sound of slates being blown off the heaps horizontally into the air. Indeed, one rescuer was hit on the back of the neck by a flying slate and another got a piece in his eye.

Meanwhile, four parties of Duddon and Furness team members were deployed from a high access point at the dam at Seathwaite reservoir, their objective to search up to Goatswater Hause, Brown Pike to Dow Crag via Walna Scar and all retreat and access points of the ridge from Old Man to Levers Hause down to the Seathwaite reservoir. A search dog handler set out from the Three Shires stone for Swirl How.

Mobile phone contact with the lost party was maintained by the base throughout the rescue, with the mobile phone battery life reducing. The party had managed to regain the ridge and were holding onto a cairn for protection. Eventually, at 22.15, one of the search teams reached the party, placed them in a shelter and assessed their condition. They decided to attempt to walk off. At this point a sigh of relief went through the team as a stretcher carry for one or more people that night would have been virtually impossible. The winds were estimated to be 80 mph gusting up to 100 mph. A carry would have been out of the question. Going to ground would also have been difficult as the weather forecast was for higher winds the following day. The party and all rescuers made a slow descent.

At 23.30 all parties were thought to have returned. It became clear that a dog handler was still on the hill and had been uncontactable for some time. He was eventually contacted an hour and a half later, safe and off the hill.

Lessons learned and questions raised by this rescue

When do you say you are not going out, it is too dangerous for rescuers?

This rescue was avoidable – the party had been warned about winter conditions by a team member the day before.

The wind strength was unusually strong that night and there was a high risk of injury and death as a result of it. There was a wind speed of 126 miles an hour recorded on Aonach Moor that evening.

There was opportunity to wait a few hours till the wind reduced and the front to pass through as the forecast was for up to another 24 hours of stormy weather and becoming colder.

The nature of this rescue, and the need to locate and retrieve these three walkers as soon as possible before they became stretcher cases, necessitated a large number of team members (40 in this case) who, for six hours, risked their own lives to save three inexperienced walkers.

What exactly would we have done if these three huddled behind a cairn on the Brim Fell ridge had not been walkable? If they had been in a state of more advanced hypothermia we would have had three stretcher cases. These thoughts were being considered at both team bases. It would not have been possible to get one stretcher to their location, let alone three. They would have to have been dragged and moved to a lower position in the lee of the ridge to contemplate getting a stretcher to them.

Should we ever send dog handlers out on their own? In years gone past in our region, it was standard practice to send a navigator/companion with a SARDA handler but this has gone by the way in recent years. I know that I never, ever want to be sat in Control worrying and wondering what has happened to a lone dog handler with no GPS track, no radio, or mobile or text contact, and then having members to search for him, all the time fearing the worst and imagining that conversation with his partner. Anybody, however experienced, can trip or slip especially on a stormy night like this.

Radios and GPS tracking and mobile phones can and will fail and probably most likely on a night with conditions like this. Have you still got the operational procedures, party leadership, knowledge and systems to successfully and safely operate as we used to do without these technological advances?

In conclusion, we thankfully do not have that many rescues that, when it is all over, have us asking quite so many questions. Sharing near misses and lessons learned is vitally important for MR.

Lake District		17/12, 17/12, 17/12, 19/12, 12/12, 28/12, 22/10
Cockermouth	05/10, 09/10, 13/10, 14/10, 17/10, 09/11, 09/11, 19/11 21/11, 29/11, 09/12, 22/12, 27/12	OB Wales 10/10, 26/10, 27/10, 28/10, 23/11, 19/12
Coniston	02/10, 02/10, 14/10, 16/10, 19/10, 26/10, 15/11, 20/11 01/10	North East
COMRU	22/12	Cleveland 09/10, 17/10, 06/11, 14/11, 29/11, 01/12, 01/12, 04/12, 07/12, 08/12, 09/12, 10/12, 10/12, 19/12, 20/12, 19/12 22/12, 24/12
Duddon & Furness	01/12, 01/10, 22/11, 19/12, 23/12	Swaledale 02/10, 12/10, 17/10
Kendal	09/10, 10/10, 14/10, 15/10, 16/10, 21/10, 25/10, 26/10 01/11, 14/11, 21/11, 28/11, 27/11, 28/11, 07/12, 08/12 09/12, 19/12, 20/12, 27/12, 26/12, 03/12	Teesdale & Weardale 26/12
Keswick	08/10, 09/10, 16/10, 16/10, 16/10, 19/10, 20/10, 22/10 25/10, 27/10, 02/11, 04/11, 06/11, 09/11, 17/11, 20/11 23/11, 04/12, 21/11, 22/12, 06/12, 19/12, 27/12, 28/12 28/12, 28/12	Peak District
Kirkby Stephen	26/10, 28/11, 30/11, 30/11, 09/12, 22/12, 26/12	Buxton 03/10, 03/11, 02/10, 06/10, 07/10, 09/10, 16/10, 17/10 17/10, 17/10, 20/11, 02/10, 16/10, 26/10, 26/10, 11/11 01/12, 02/12
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Patterdale	05/10, 02/10, 03/10, 09/10, 10/10, 10/10, 11/10, 16/10 24/10, 04/11, 07/11, 20/11, 22/12, /11, 11/11, 20/11 20/11, 27/11, 03/12, 03/12, 27/12, 29/12, 30/12	Edale 03/10, 02/10, 03/10, 06/10, 07/10, 09/10, 10/10, 16/10 15/10, 17/10, 17/10, 17/10, 10/11, 12/11, 14/11, 20/11 21/11, 02/10, 26/10, 26/10, 01/12, 27/10, 02/12, 03/12 06/12, 25/12, 28/12, 29/12
Penrith	21/10, 28/10, 11/10, 27/11, 02/12, 12/12, 12/12, 22/12 27/12, 28/12, 03/12, 03/12, 30/12	Glossop 03/11, 31/10, 16/10
Wasdale	11/10, 12/10, 12/10, 25/10, 06/11, 07/11, 18/12, 20/12 07/10, 09/10, 09/10, 13/10, 30/10, 28/11, 28/11, 03/12	Kinder 03/10, 31/10, 03/11, 02/12, 03/12
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Bowland Pennine	01/12, 07/10, 17/10, 17/10, 28/10, 17/12, 18/12, 18/12 18/12, 19/12, 25/12, 27/12	Peninsula
Calder Valley	5/10, 10/10, 21/11, 01/12, 01/12, 02/12, 19/12, 27/12	Cornwall 17/10, 03/10
Rossendale & Pendle	05/10, 08/10, 31/10, 08/11, 30/11, 01/12, 02/12, 03/12 04/12, 06/12, 09/12, 10/12, 17/12, 18/12, 19/12, 20/12 27/12	Dartmoor (Tavistock) 17/10, 12/11
NE England		Exmoor 09/10, 09/10, 11/11, 13/11, 19/11, 19/11, 19/11, 19/11 22/12, 31/12
Cleveland	01/07, 05/07, 24/07, 09/08, 22/08, 26/08, 28/08, 04/09	South Wales
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Northumberland NP	20/07, 30/07, 13/08, 04/09	Central Beacons 04/11, 26/11, 26/11, 28/11, 04/12, 09/10, 01/11, 01/11 29/11, 17/12, 19/12, 20/12, 18/12, 18/12
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North East Wales	30/11, 31/10, 27/11, 19/12, 26/10, 22/10	England 03/10, 12/10, 31/10, 03/11, 16/10, 20/11, 11/10, 01/12 22/12, 28/12
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		Wales 01/10, 01/12, 16/11, 31/10, 22/12, 26/10, 22/10
		South Wales 28/11, 09/10, 19/10, 24/12
		RAF
		Valley 09/10, 09/10, 01/11, 13/11, 31/10
		Non-specialists 01/10, 31/10

Snippets from the Journals

A PROPOSED DECISION-MAKING GUIDE FOR THE SEARCH, RESCUE AND RESUSCITATION OF SUBMERSION (HEAD UNDER) VICTIMS

Professor Mike Tipton and Dr Frank Golden
Department of Sport and Exercise Science, University of Portsmouth

There is some confusion and consequent variation in policy, between the agencies responsible for the search, rescue and resuscitation of submersion victims regarding the likelihood of survival following a period of submersion. The aim of this work was to recommend a decision-making guide for such victims. The guidance was arrived at by a review of the relevant literature and specific case studies, and a 'consensus' meeting on the topic. The factors found to be important for determining the possibility of prolonged survival underwater were: water temperature; salinity of water; duration of submersion; and age of the victim. Of these, only water temperature and duration are sufficiently clear to form the basis of guidance in this area.

It is concluded that if water temperature is warmer than 6°C, survival/resuscitation is extremely unlikely if submerged longer than 30 minutes.

If water temperature is 6°C or below, survival/resuscitation is extremely unlikely if submerged for longer than 90 minutes.

In an endeavour to bring some practical sense to this complex question the following advice is offered. Open water rescue of submerged victims, clearly visible from the surface may, to the unwary, appear to be straightforward, but nevertheless requires an understanding of the risks involved. Rescues involving an underwater search require special skills and training to increase the chance both of

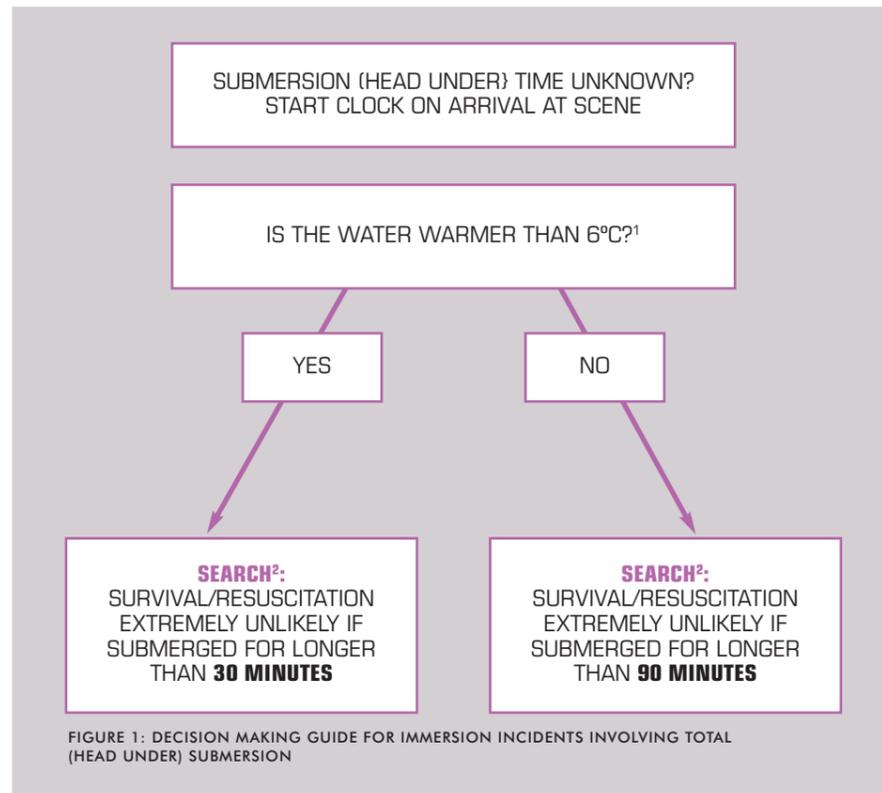


FIGURE 1: DECISION MAKING GUIDE FOR IMMERSION INCIDENTS INVOLVING TOTAL (HEAD UNDER) SUBMERSION

success, and reduce the threat to life of the rescuer. Apart from a basic full understanding of the dangers of cold shock (ie. the requirement for a period of adaptation before moving into deep water) and the impact of progressive impairment of physical activities with time in cold water, other factors must be considered before attempting a rescue of submerged victims.

1. Have you received specialised training in cold water/underwater search and rescue?
2. Do you have adequate or specialised immersion protective clothing or equipment?
3. Are there adequate supporting personnel/facilities?
4. Are you competent and do you have the necessary support to undertake rescues at night or in water with poor visibility?

5. Are there potentially dangerous currents?
6. What is the distance/time to transport rescued casualty to specialised unit capable of the treatment of apparently dead hypothermic casualties (ie. unit with capability to provide cardio-pulmonary bypass)?

Figure 1 notes

¹Water temperature outdoors in and around the UK averages about 10°C over the year but varies between about 0°-25°C, depending on location and the type of water. UK coastal water can, on occasion, fall below 5°C and mountain streams and pools can be below 5°C for the majority of the year.

²Search. Factors to consider when making a risk assessment: the perennial problem facing members of the emergency services when confronted with the rescue of a submerged victim is whether

the risk to the rescuer outweighs the probability of a successful outcome. The dilemma was increased in recent years with the publication of a number of accounts of successful resuscitation in a minority of cases. Given this information, rescue personnel feel obliged to continue the search for submerged individuals for a period of at least 60 minutes or longer, regardless of the risk to themselves; failure to do so may be adjudged as being negligent and possibly leave a sense of failure in the rescuer. Likewise, failure to continue with resuscitative efforts in these victims for several hours, regardless of practical difficulties (and efficacy) involved in the prevailing 'field' conditions, may also be considered negligent or lacking in commitment.

This article will appear in full in 'resuscitation' in May.



From the Medical Officer:

Thank you to the following teams for notifying me of your Controlled Drug stock. To remain fully compliant you will need to send an updated record for 2011 by the 17 January 2012. Please put it in your diaries.

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Kirkby Stephen
Langdale Ambleside
Llanberis
Mendip
Northumberland NP
Patterdale

Rosendale & Pendle
Scarborough &
Ryedale
Upper Wharfedale FRA
Woodhead

Broadly defined, 'wilderness' is a geographical setting an hour or more from definitive medical care. Planned for launch this year, the Wilderness Lifeskills Programme is a series of modular first aid and EMT courses, designed in association with Lifeskills Medical Services. The programme aims to equip individuals and organisations with a comprehensive range of skills for effective casualty care within a remote or wilderness environment, both within the UK and overseas.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW:

- 16 hour Remote Emergency First Aid
- 16 hour Paediatric Remote First Aid
- 16 hour Expedition Food Safety and Hygiene
- 10-day Remote Emergency Medical Technician
- 5-day Remote Casualty Care
- Remote Emergency First Aid
- Course overview

The Remote Emergency First Aid course forms the entry level of the programme. Designed for those working within the outdoor industry, it fulfils the requirements of the NGBs. Successful completion leads to the gaining of two certificates – the HSE Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) and a 16-hour Remote Emergency First Aid certificate issued by Lifeskills Medical Services. Both qualifications are valid for three years.

The theory content of this 16-hour course can either be taught indoors within a classroom setting, or outdoors on location under cover. This is designed to make the course as flexible and as accessible as possible for clients. There is a heavy emphasis on practical skills throughout the course, with plenty of outdoor-based scenarios, utilising casualty make-up in order to aid realism.

The ethos of the Remote Emergency First Aid course is to provide a well-structured and well-taught syllabus, which provides the outdoor activity professional with both the competence and the confidence to administer safe and effective casualty care, should the need arise.

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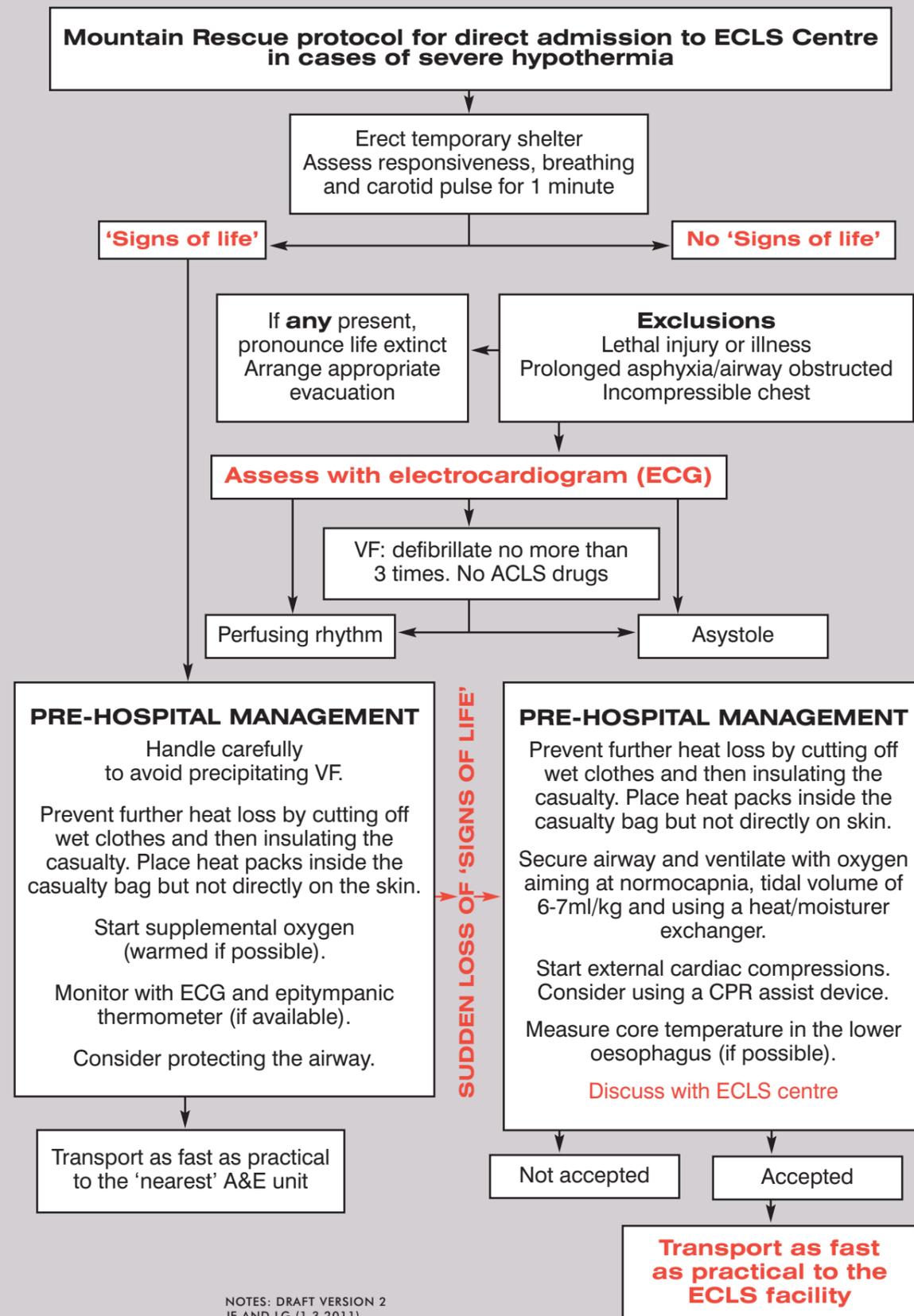
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Hypothermia protocol: Draft 2



NOTES: DRAFT VERSION 2
JE AND LG (1.3.2011)

Protocol for the management of mountain rescue casualties with severe hypothermia and cardiac arrest

Drs John Ellerton, Les Gordon and Giles Peek

Preamble:

Patients with severe primary hypothermia with a secondary cardiac arrest are rare, less than a handful per year from the mountain rescue teams in the UK. They can be resuscitated by extracorporeal life support (ECLS). [i][ii] However, it must be recognised that ECLS is an expensive and limited resource and that, in futile cases, it is unethical. [iii] This protocol has been designed to facilitate the transfer of suitable mountain rescue patients from their out of hospital location to a unit able to provide effective ECLS with the minimum of delay as proposed by Peek, Davis and Ellerton. [iv] The protocol is in draft form, so please send comments to John Ellerton/Les Gordon. We are busy getting the ECLS units on board and then will launch the final protocol, (which will include details of agreeing centres with contact details, helicopter landing site, admission procedure, etc.) at the MR E&W Medical Seminar in Ambleside 5th November 2011.

The steps involved include:

Identify suitable patients

The history should be compatible with primary hypothermia. That is person should have been subject to a cold stress and become severely hypothermic (<30°C) as a consequence. Minor injury (for example, lower leg sprain) and some drug overdoses may have contributed to the hypothermia but circumstances indicating a fall with no attempts of the patient to get into a comfortable position suggests that the hypothermia is secondary to trauma or a cardiac arrest. Likewise, secondary hypothermia is suggested by evidence of asphyxia from vomit or submersion under water for greater than 90 minutes. These cases would be examples of exclusions. Alaskan guidelines have an exclusion of > 3 hrs to definitive care. [v] In poor weather this 'time limit' can be reached in the UK. Though there is no scientific evidence backing the Alaskan guideline, it should be considered with other relevant factors such as the danger of helicopter evacuation and rescuer safety as a relative exclusion.

Optimise pre-hospital management

The optimum pre-hospital management of severe hypothermia with cardiac arrest is largely unknown but the management outlined here is the consensus of a number of authors. [vi], [vii], [viii], [ix] Prognostic factors that have been identified (age, concomitant illness, serum potassium, blood pH) are rarely helpful in the rescue phase. [x], [xi] However, witnessed arrest (sudden loss of 'signs of life') often results in an excellent recovery and this should be borne in mind. [xii], [xiii], [xiv]

Communication with ECLS unit

It is wrong to transfer a patient to a distant hospital for a specific treatment if that hospital cannot provide it. Therefore before unilaterally embarking on such a transfer, the mountain rescue team must communicate with the ECLS unit to: discuss the patient, their pre-hospital management and the time scales involved. Only on acceptance of the patient should a definitive evacuation destination be confirmed.

Audit

There is much to be learnt about the management of the pre-hospital phase of severe hypothermia through audit. Entering patients with severe hypothermia in the international hypothermia registry co-ordinated by Prof. Beat Walpoth (Geneva) should be routine. [xv] Please contact Dr. John Ellerton (ellerton@enterprise.net) who will assist in the registration.

[i] Walpoth BH, Walpoth-Aslan BN, Mattle HP, et al. Outcome of survivors of accidental deep hypothermia and circulatory arrest treated with extracorporeal blood warming. *N Engl J Med* 1997;337:1500-5.

[ii] Ruttman E, Weissenbacher A, Ulmer H, et al. Prolonged extracorporeal membrane oxygenation-assisted support provides improved survival in hypothermic patients with cardiocirculatory arrest. *J Thorac Cardiovasc Surg* 2007;134:594-600.

[iii] Larach MG. Accidental hypothermia *The Lancet* 1995; 345, 493-8

[iv] Peek GR, Davis PR, Ellerton JA. Management of severe accidental hypothermia. In: *Yearbook of Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine*. 2008. Springer. Pp. 147-59

[v] Department of Health and Social Services Division of Public Health. State of Alaska Cold Injuries Guidelines available at <http://www.chems.alaska.gov/EMS/documents/AKColdInj2005.pdf> accessed Feb 2011

[vi] Brugger H, Durrer B, Adler-Kastner L, et al. Field management of avalanche victims. *Resuscitation* 2001;51:7-15.

[vii] Larach M. Accidental hypothermia *The Lancet* 1995; 345:493-8

[viii] Ellerton J. Hypothermia in Casualty Care in Mountain Rescue, 2nd edition. 2006 Reed's Penrith. Page 194-213

[ix] Giesbrecht G. Prehospital treatment of hypothermia. *Wilderness and Environmental Medicine* 2001; 12:24-31

[x] Vassal T, Benoit-Gonin B, Carrat F, Guidet B et al. Severe accidental hypothermia treated in an ICU: Prognosis and outcome. *Chest* 2001; 120:1998-2003

[xi] Silvast T, Pettila V. Outcome from severe hypothermia in Southern Finland - a 10 year review. *Resuscitation* 2003; 59:285-290

[xii] Moser B, Voelckel W, Gardetto A, Sumanna G, Wenzel V. One night in a snowbank: A case report of severe hypothermia and cardiac arrest *Resuscitation* 2005; 65:365-368

[xiii] Hughes A, Riou P, Day C. Full neurological recovery from profound (18.0°C) acute accidental hypothermia: successful resuscitation using active invasive rewarming techniques. *Emerg. Med. J.* 2007;24:511-512

[xiv] Oberhammer R, et al., Full recovery of an avalanche victim with profound hypothermia and prolonged cardiac arrest treated by extracorporeal re-warming. *Resuscitation* (2007), doi:10.1016/j.resuscitation.2007.09.004

[xv] Walpoth B. International Hypothermia Registry see: <https://www.hypothermia-registry.org>

MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES MEDICAL SEMINAR

SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER
CHARLOTTE MASON COLLEGE

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

08:30-09:15

Registration, coffee and trade exhibition

HYPOTHERMIA

INTRODUCTION AND CHAIR:

Les Gordon (10 mins)

09:25 SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA INCLUDING

EFFECTS ON THE BODY Dr Peter Paal, Associate Professor, Innsbruck (20 mins)

09:45 WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE

PREHOSPITAL MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA? John Ellerton (15 mins)

10:00 2010 AVALANCHE GUIDELINES

Dr Peter Paal (20 mins)

10:20-10:45 Coffee + trade exhibition

10:45 OVERVIEW OF CPB/ECMO

Mr Giles Peek, Cardiac Surgeon, Leicester (20 mins)

11:05 TYING IT ALL TOGETHER, INCLUDING

PROTOCOL FOR DIRECT ADMISSION TO ECLS UNIT AND Q&A FROM THE PANEL Les Gordon with the above (30 mins)

PHYSICAL FITNESS IN RESCUERS

INTRODUCTION AND CHAIR

John Ellerton (5 mins)

11:45 FITNESS REQUIREMENTS FOR RNLI

AND HM COASTGUARD Professor Mike Tipton, Professor of Human & Applied Physiology and Miss Gemma Milligan, Portsmouth (30 mins)

012:15 PHYSIOLOGICAL DEMANDS OF

MOUNTAIN RESCUE Dr Jamie MacDonald, Lecturer in Clinical Exercise Physiology and Outdoor Activities, Bangor University (30 mins)

Q&A SESSION (15 mins)

13:00-14:00

Lunch + trade exhibition

PAIN RELIEF IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

INTRODUCTION (INCLUDING SUMMARY OF OPTIONS FOR TREATMENT OF PAIN) AND CHAIR Linda Dykes (15 mins)

14:15 ANALGESIA - RESULT OF MREW AUDIT AND EVALUATION OF PAIN MANAGEMENT IN MR

Mr Mike Greene, Consultant A&E (45 mins)

15:00 Q&A SESSION David Allan, Linda Dykes, John Ellerton, Les Gordon, Mike Greene (30 mins)

15:30 CLOSING SUMMARY David Allan



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FOLLOWING AN ITEM IN OUR JANUARY ISSUE ON THE USE OF THE TRENDELBURG POSITION TO IMPROVE HAEMODYNAMICS DURING HYPOVOLAEMIC SHOCK...

Dear Judy

In the January 2011 issue of MR Magazine, a 'Best BET' paper was quoted from the Emergency Medical Journal about the use of the Trendelenburg position to improve the circulation during shock, due to hypovolaemia (low blood volume) following a gunshot wound. The paper's 'clinical bottom line' is that 'there is no evidence of benefit for patients with low blood pressure and this practice is not recommended.' This may be correct, but it cannot be supported by the publications quoted in the review for several reasons.

None of the studies were in major trauma, but involved patients who had low blood pressure due to critical illnesses such as poor heart function following cardiac surgery or severe overwhelming infection (sepsis), or following the administration of a spinal anaesthetic. These conditions all interfere with the normal function of the heart and circulation and would, therefore, make it very difficult to identify any effect of the Trendelenburg position. Needless to say, casualties with these conditions are never seen on the mountains. Secondly, as pointed out by the authors of the Best BET, all the studies they looked at had methodological flaws such as small

numbers of patients or different amounts of head-down tilt (10-30°). Put together, these factors effectively mean that there is no good evidence to support or refute the use of Trendelenburg, and this is the conclusion of other reviews of this topic that were not quoted in the Best BET. Remaining in an upright position without flexing the legs will allow blood to pool in the legs due to gravity. As a result, the blood pressure will fall. This is illustrated by the soldier who stands at attention for long periods and subsequently faints, but is also seen in MR in cases of suspension trauma – a state of shock induced by passive hanging in a harness.

It is clear from reading the quoted papers and other publications on Trendelenburg that raising the legs or putting the patient head-down causes blood to move from the legs into the trunk by gravity. This increases the amount of blood flowing back to the heart, even though there may be no significant change in blood pressure as a result. This explains the so-called 'detrimental effect' mentioned in the last paragraph of the extract. There is a fall in blood pressure when the patient is returned to the horizontal position because of redistribution of blood from the trunk back into the legs. This phenomenon is not uncommonly seen by anaesthetists in patients whose

operations are performed in the head-down position or with their legs in the air. This fall in blood pressure could therefore be interpreted as indirectly supporting the value of the head-down position because in a patient who is bleeding severely and who has a reduced blood volume, it is in the body's interests to reduce the amount of tissue that receives a blood supply. In fact, this is the body's normal response to major bleeding; it shuts down blood flow to non-essential areas such as the skin. I would expect that if one is faced with a trauma patient on the mountains who is bleeding to death and has a very low blood pressure, and it is not possible to transfuse them or the MR team have run out of IV fluids, then raising the legs may allow a little more blood to return to the heart and maintain the blood supply to the brain. There may not be an observable increase in blood pressure but when a patient is in-extremis, this is not surprising. Finally, I would urge readers to use great caution when considering applying clinical recommendations that were written for use in very sick hospital patients to otherwise healthy casualties as seen in mountain rescue.

Dr HL Gordon
Consultant Anaesthetist
Langdale Ambleside MRT



ALSAR NEWS

Johnnie Walker

The 2011 ALSAR Conference will be bigger and better than ever before. The conference, which will be held at De Vere's Harben venue in Milton Keynes, will host fifteen or more guest speakers from a wide range of agencies, and exhibitors from all the best providers of search and rescue equipment, with some exclusive conference deals to be made. The conference takes place from 30 September to 2 October, and will cost £120 to non-ALSAR delegates.

It will be a weekend of shared knowledge, experience, motivations and ideas with the best professional SAR personnel in the country, and is based on the theme of Lowland Search and Rescue, focusing on vulnerable missing person search and civil contingency responses – a weekend of fantastic learning and networking opportunities, in the comfort of a well equipped, and comfortable venue.

ALSAR is the organising body for lowland search and rescue in the UK and comprises twenty units, representing 26 counties, totalling 900 professional SAR volunteers. ALSAR sets the standards for lowland search and rescue in the UK and also sets the agreed code of practice for any unit working under its name with their local police service. ALSAR sits on the UK Search and Rescue Operators Group alongside Mountain Rescue England and Wales and the RNLI, representing Lowland SAR at the government level.

ALSAR is the best kept secret in the UK. Our units turn up, do their job in an effective and professional manner, and fade away quietly into the background, content in the knowledge of a job well done and it's growing fast, with five new probationary units being accepted across the last six months. In five years time, we aim to offer appropriate coverage to all lowland areas of the UK that are not within the operational area of mountain rescue teams.

To get in touch with ALSAR, please email our chair, Adrian Edwards at chair@alsar.org.uk for any queries or information, or visit our website at www.alsar.org.uk.



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We have a few departures to Kilimanjaro still available where we are recruiting medical staff and, if you just wish to participate on a challenge this year or next, we have over 150 departure dates so please visit www.charitychallenge.com for more information.



For Expedition Medics who are doctors, we are looking for minimum two years, post-qualification experience, and Accident & Emergency experience would be desirable but not essential. You should have either worked as an Expedition Medic previously and/or have high altitude trekking experience. Expedition Medics who aren't doctors will need to have done an advanced prescribing course in order to qualify. In order to join us as an Expedition Medic you would first need to send your CV to sbostic@charitychallenge.com.



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The First National Water Conference: Edale MRT Base



Neil Roden
with thanks to Andy Lee
for all his hard work

The first National Water Conference was held on 22 January, hosted by Edale MRT at Edale headquarters. The aim of the conference was to provide a forum for education amongst all mountain rescue members involved in water rescue and incident management. Ninety-nine people attended, representing 34 teams from across England and Wales.

Planning for this event began nine months previously, with the decision for Edale to host it agreed at the MREW National Water committee. A Water Conference committee was created locally to organise the event and invitations were extended to teams involved in water rescue incidents across the UK, all of whom were asked to provide details of specific incidents they had attended, for the lunchtime forum. The conference proved extremely popular, with a huge demand for available places. A massive amount of work and effort was put into organising what proved to be a successful and educationally valuable conference. And, to start on a positive note: the success of this, the inaugural event, means a National Water Conference will become an annual event.

The conference was chaired by Andy Lee, full-time fire officer, MC paramedic, SRT instructor, Edale team member and leader of Edale water rescue team, and representative of the Peak District on the National Water committee. The organising committee was made up of members of the Edale mountain and water rescue teams – Neil Hayter (vice-chairman), Laura Cooper (event coordinator), James Stubley and Paul Driver, as well as Martin Bills, a full-time fire officer with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. Delegates were provided with conference packs including information on the speakers and conference committee, and the latest document produced by the National Water committee.

Lectures covered a vast range of topics from experienced water rescue speakers from a variety of backgrounds, all of whom are well known in the circles of water rescue in the UK and beyond. Lectures covered topics such as incident command and safety management, with national and international considerations. Andy Lee presented a session on incident command and safety management, which was felt to be extremely valuable amongst delegates. He also presented the lecture on medical considerations in water rescue, in the absence of the planned pre-hospital doctor.

Martin Bills updated the delegates about the DEFRA National Enhancement Project and, together with Paul O'Sullivan, delivered a session on flood theory. Ogwen Valley member, and Rescue 3 instructor, Chris Onions presented an excellent lecture detailing the development of his local water rescue team, as well as an update on the latest PPE and equipment available for water rescue personnel.

Delegates were then given the opportunity to ask the experts during the lunch session about kit, and browse posters about a selection of incidents from across the UK presented by various water teams. There was a selection of PPE on display, sponsored by Desperate Measures, Nottingham in conjunction with Palm Equipment.

A huge thanks is extended to Avon, Buxton, Cockermouth, Edale and Penrith, who shared experiences during the lunchtime using poster boards. Questions were sent to the five teams who agreed to support the session asking them to outline the details of the incidents and highlight the learning points from each. This was well received amongst delegates, and it was clear that the learning points from these incidents were common to each incident:

- Preparation is essential

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Wish you were there?

AMA DABLAM BY PAUL LEWIS



When I was twelve my friends dragged me, rather reluctantly, to the local scout group. I was ushered into a room to meet the leader, who welcomed me warmly and announced that we were going climbing that evening at a local quarry. The quarry was a damp and dismal place, but as soon as I did my very first climb I was hooked. For someone who had never enjoyed traditional team sports climbing offered a door to another world. The week after, I was back at scouts and went to the leader's office to pay my subs. As my money was counted I glanced around the room and my eyes fell on a poster showing a magnificent mountain with the most perfect shape and features. I was still gazing at the picture when the leader turned to give me my change and he saw the look in my eyes. 'That's Ama Dablam,' he said. 'I think it's the most beautiful mountain in the world.'

Thirty years later and I was booked as an expedition leader for an Everest Base Camp trek and an ascent of Island Peak in Nepal. I'd never forgotten Ama Dablam but I'd never got around to climbing it either. Over recent years my regular partners had shown interest but work, families or finance had always stopped play. Then a chance conversation with a work colleague changed all that – Toby had time, money and no family, and Ama Dablam was his dream mountain too.

At about 6850 metres Ama Dablam is classed, under the Nepalese permit system, as a climbing peak. Toby and I needed to either apply for a permit or, more easily, join an established expedition. We both wanted to climb the mountain as a team of two rather than being part of a larger group, but were also short of time to organise the logistics so joining another team had a lot of benefits. Luckily, we found the perfect compromise and managed to buy into the permit and logistics for a guided team from the Lakes.

By any standards Ama Dablam is a gorgeous mountain. Firstly, it's a classic mountain shape with pointed summit and steep, sculpted sides and ridgelines. Add to that its dominant position at the head of the valley and its interesting standard ascent line and it's the perfect package. I also think the name is evocative and enticing. Research its origin and you'll find several possibilities. My favourite is that it refers to the turquoise or coral necklace usually worn by married women. If you stretch your imagination you can visualise shoulders and a head with the huge lump of blue ice (the Dablam) in about the right spot for a necklace.

Expeditions to the mountain usually acclimatise in traditional style. A gentle walk up the Khumbu Valley to base camp followed by lots of upping and downing to the camps before a summit bid. My work commitments required a different strategy but I was confident we would have a perfect acclimatisation profile. A circuit up from Namche to Gokyo, over the Cho La Pass and up to Everest Base Camp and Kala Pattar. Then over to Island Peak for an ascent before the trek round to Ama Dablam Base Camp.

Hopefully, at that point we'd just need a rest day before working our way up the mountain using camps established along the route.

The Khumbu trek was stunning and Island Peak, a classic 6100 metre trekking peak, was great fun. There are great views everywhere you look in that area but I was particularly inspired by the views of Lhotse South Face from the summit of Island Peak and the great vistas across to Everest, Nuptse and Pumori from Kala Pattar. Ama Dablam is different. It can be seen from just about anywhere in the valley and its presence was always there. I was itching to get across and get started on it. I was also nervous.

Soon enough we trekked up to Ama Dablam Base Camp. It was great to catch up on the news from the Lakes team and enjoy the luxuries base camp offered. They were all at varying stages of ascent and Toby and I would be the last ascent team on the mountain. We had been on the go for eighteen days by the time we hit base camp but we could only spare one rest day before our ascent – and even that day looked set to be dominated by packing and sorting logistics.

The classic ascent route for Ama Dablam is the South West Ridge. After a slog up to Advance Base Camp the route follows a boulder field and slabs to Camp 1 which is situated at the far end of the ridge. Spectacular scrambling then leads to the technical crux of the route, the Yellow Tower. Climb it free and it is said to be HVS. Use the fixed ropes and you get to swing in a spectacular position above a vertical sea of perfect yellow granite. Either way you end up at the picture postcard location of Camp 2, situated on a small rocky pinnacle with sheer drops on all sides.

From here, some people bolt straight for the summit but it is more usual to use a third camp as a staging post. In 2006 a tragic avalanche killed several climbers at Camp 3 and some expeditions now use a camp further



bleak site right at the end of the South West Ridge. Our tent was on a small platform with several inches of the groundsheet overhanging the slabs and big rocks sticking up through the floor. Even so, it was still a cosy spot once we got settled in. Even better that we both still had good appetites and

right that is often referred to as 'Camp 2.9'. The final ascent day is a long haul past the Dablam and up steep icy slopes to the eventual top out on one of the most aesthetic summits on the planet.

Toby and I packed as minimally as we could but still managed to fill 50 litre rucksacks. As always the equipment we chose was a balance between the things we knew would be essential and the things we thought we might need. It was useful to talk to other team members and a recurring message was that the early part of summit day remained in the shade for a long time. In fact, freezing feet and hands during this section had been showstoppers for several people we spoke to – we packed plenty of insulation layers, extra mittens, hand and foot warmers and neoprene overboots just in case.

After packing I went to bed early but I never sleep well before starting a big route, and tonight was no exception. The night was filled with those 'what ifs' that climbers always battle and I was glad when the streaks of sunlight started peeking over the surrounding peaks and hit the tent. In the end I needn't have worried. A long slog up a steep ridge path led us to Advance Base Camp. We'd opted to spend a night here to aid acclimatisation and we were treated to a beautiful sunset. It felt great to be heading up.

The ascent to Camp One is also technically straightforward. Hopping across a huge boulder field and a slog up easy-angled slopes leads to a

there was a mountain of food left behind by previous teams. We spent the evening feasting and rehydrating on everything from dried sushi to Nepalese baked beans.

After Camp One things get more technical. The route covers interesting scrambling terrain that's a mix of something like the North Ridge of Tryfan and some lovely Chamonix granite route like Papillons Ridge. I loved this day and got totally involved in the scrambling, the views and the knife-edge ridge. Even if I'd gone no further, that single day would have made it all feel worthwhile. This day also culminates in the Yellow Tower. I loved jugging up in the sunshine with the exposure and the brilliant situation. I'd only brought one ascender, to save weight, so I backed it up with a prussik loop on a second rope and it felt safe enough.

After the tower a short section of ridge led us to Camp Two. This is an iconic campsite that I'd seen in many photos. The reality was every bit as good as the photos. We settled in to the tent and battled to get things organised in the limited space. As soon as the sun left the ridge the temperatures plummeted and we got the jetboils fired up while enjoying the sunset. The views from Camp Two were simply amazing and I couldn't have been happier – what's not to love about Himalayan climbs.

We woke to find something not to love. We were enveloped in thick



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Photo: Andy Bagworth

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Media partner for the Corbett Challenge 2011.

▶ page 49

cloud and a layer of fresh snow coated the tent. Toby was also suffering with altitude and a hacking cough that had troubled him for weeks. We needed a rethink. Lhakpa Sherpa was heading to Camp Two and Toby kindly offered to wait at the camp while Lhakpa partnered me to the summit. A lot of time and effort had led to this point and, although I was reluctant to leave Toby, I was also really keen to give the summit a shot. The conditions weren't great but we decided to head up and see what the weather decided to do.

After Camp Two the main feature before high camp is the Grey Couloir. I'd been woken several times by the sound of rocks tumbling down this intimidating feature and I knew it wasn't a place I wanted to spend much time. As we ascended it nearly ended in tears when Lhakpa dislodged a TV sized block ten metres above me. I was just happy to get to top camp.

Having said, that top camp was a shock too. This site, which occupies a small ledge tucked under large ice cliffs, is quite sheltered from the wind but has large ice bosses overhanging the tent that must have weighed a few thousands tonnes! I felt sure it would be another long night and I wasn't wrong. Creaking noises from the ice and apprehension about summit day kept me awake for hours. It was also bitterly cold and I spent a lot of the night focused on trying to stay warm. Most of all though, I lay awake wondering if tomorrow would be the day I turned my thirty year dream into reality?

Ama Dablam's summit day follows ice slopes to the right edge of the Dablam before more steep slopes lead to the flat summit. The section up to the Dablam remains in shade for several hours and is very exposed to the wind. This means there's no point in starting summit day too early, as it's better to maximise the amount of time in the sun. We decided to leave at 8.00am. I struggled to force down some breakfast before wrapping up in every scrap of insulation I'd brought with me. I also took a light rucksack with some liquid, food, goggles and spare gloves.

Before leaving, I radioed Toby to see how things were below. It turned out he'd had a difficult night with strong winds buffeting the tent. We hadn't noticed these winds in the sheltered haven of Camp 2.9 but I wondered what it would be like when we moved round to the face.

As with many summit days the memory is a blur of emotion, exhaustion and tension. The wind was bitter and, occasionally, we'd get slammed into the face and have to wait until the gust passed. I had to stop several times to warm my fingers

and once or twice I wondered whether they were getting too cold to continue. I earn my living with my hands and permanent damage wasn't an option I wanted to consider. But, most of all, it was the scale of the mountain that is my overriding memory. Of course, I shouldn't have been surprised. If I could sit miles away and view the Dablam why wouldn't I think it was a massive feature that would take hours to surmount?

But eventually the slopes opened out and the angle eased. I couldn't see the summit due to the swirling spindrift but I had the feeling it was close. As it is so flat it actually arrived very suddenly and I climbed the last easy-angled slope to the summit. A stumble over a surprise crevasse and there I was – stupendous 360 degree views as far as the eye could see. Everest, Pumori, Lhotse and Nuptse – Himalayan giants in every direction and everything I'd hoped it would be.

I wanted to enjoy the moment as long as possible but the bitter wind and apprehension about the descent drove us down after 25 minutes. I've always treated descents with great respect and this was no exception – every rappel double-checked and fully focused on the features we passed. The visibility was even worse at this stage and I knew we couldn't afford to make a mistake. Eventually we passed the shredded tents that marked Camp Three and weaved around to our peaceful haven at 2.9. A couple of hours' rest, plenty of fluids and we carried on down. I was keen to get back to Toby.

There seemed to be more loose rock than ever in the Grey Couloir but we made it through. Toby had seen us descending and was waiting with food, hot drinks, smiles and handshakes. It had been a long few days for him and it was great to be reunited. After a final night we headed for the valley. Another full day of descent and eventually we walked into base camp. As I dropped my rucksack and lay down on the lush grass a few tears rolled down my cheeks and my mind wandered back to that poster on the scout hut wall. Above the photo was a quote from Henry David Thoreau. 'Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined'. A 30-year dream had been realised, through an adventure every bit as intense as I'd hoped. Now... what was next?!

Paul Lewis began his climbing career on the gritstone edges of the Peak District. His passion for climbing and adventure sports has led him all over the world, but he still claims a fine day on 'the grit' is always his top choice! A mountaineering instructor, his company 'Peak Mountaineering' offers a 15% discount to Mountain Rescue mag readers (please quote code MR19 when booking). Find out more at peakmountaineering.com or call 01433 620283.

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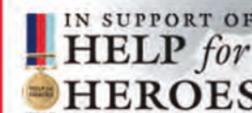


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- Train for risk, including hours of darkness
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- Provision for decontamination needs to be made
- Safety is paramount, including the importance of a 'water team approach'.

After the lunch session Robin Goodlad, who heads up the RNLI Flood Rescue Team presented the latest information about resources available for water incidents from the RNLI, which many delegates found interesting and useful. Al Read, an Outreach instructor and team member of Ogwen Valley MRO, presented the delegates with some water-based scenarios, as well as a lecture on water margin search.

Paul O'Sullivan, International Rescue 3 instructor, delivered an up-to-date session on National Training Guidance. The end of the day saw MREW Water Officer Ewan Thomas update the audience about national developments. Delegates had a further opportunity to ask questions of the panel before the conference wrapped up for the day.

Feedback was provided by delegates, which was extremely positive. The lectures and speakers were well received. Edale Mountain Rescue Team were praised for their hospitality and slick organisation of such a successful event. There were very positive comments about the venue which was felt to be ideal for this event, and the conference also proved to be good value for money.

A number of suggestions were made by delegates on feedback forms, many of whom wished to see this made into an annual event. Future conferences should see the introduction of interactive sessions, with more water kit and equipment available and many suggestions have been made for future lecture topics of which most are already in the pipeline for next year's conference!! Yes, we have managed to get the team to once again rise to the challenge and already two willing volunteers from other teams have joined the committee.

Andy Lee and the conference committee would like to take this opportunity to extend their thanks to all those involved in the planning and organisation of this event, which was such a huge success. As with all these events there are a huge amount of supporters (not forgetting the family and friends of team members) who make things happen. Edale's support group, 'Friends in High Places', provided excellent catering throughout the day.

See you next year!

THE UK MISSING PERSON BEHAVIOUR STUDY

Dave Perkins & Pete Roberts
Northumberland National Park MRT & The Centre for Search Research

Ged Feeney
Penrith MRT & Statistics Officer for Mountain Rescue England and Wales

The UK Missing Person Behaviour Study began in 2000, its aim to collect UK data relating to searches for missing persons, and from that data produce UK missing person behaviour statistics. The majority of the data collected so far has come from MR teams in England and Wales. Since the last report was published (2005) the volume of data available for analysis has increased by 80%.

There are a number of changes in this latest report, the main changes brought about by combining categories previously reported separately. Statistical analysis showed there were no significant differences between the categories 'children aged 1 to 6 years', 'children aged 7 to 12 years' and 'youths aged 13 to 16 years', and so they were combined to form a single category called 'children aged 1 to 16 years'. Likewise, no significant differences were found between the categories 'Alzheimer's sufferers' and 'dementia (general)', and they were therefore combined to form a single category of 'dementia'. The report includes for the first time possible scenarios for each category, based on the most likely outcomes of the statistics, and offered as suggestions only. Search managers should not rule out other scenarios that fit in with the available facts.

The document can be downloaded from either:
<http://www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/publications/search-management>
<http://www.searchresearch.org.uk/www/ukmpbs/>



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