

mountain rescue

JULY 2011

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ISSUE 37



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LEFT: WOODHEAD MRT LAND ROVER CENTRE: BUXTON MRT LAND ROVER RIGHT: FIRE BIKE

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**WELCOME TO
ISSUE 37**

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.

EDITORIAL

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**NEXT ISSUE
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Copy Deadline:
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Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JONES/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

Scarborough & Ryedale MRT
Land Rover bathed in sunset
at The Lion Inn
Photo: Scarborough
& Ryedale 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.



David Allan
Chairman

After several years of deliberation and negotiation it is pleasing to see that a national personal accident insurance scheme and a national benevolent fund have both come to fruition. Mountain rescue, quite rightly, focuses largely on the wellbeing of the casualty but it is essential to know that everything is being done to that safeguard. We are indebted to the people who have worked hard to bring this to pass. Neil Thomas, Penny Brockman and Richard Longman have spent many late hours poring over the insurance policy and Huw Birrell has worked similarly with the benevolent fund.

The enlargement of the MREW main meetings has been, for the most part, a success story. One difficulty lies with the rapid turnover of team representatives. This leads to a lack of continuity on occasion. It would, I think, improve the effectiveness of the discussions if teams would consider sending the same representative for a couple of years. I believe we have made some progress in communication across the organisation. The addition of another interim meeting for the purpose of providing more discussion time and clarifying understanding should be another useful step. The problem is clearly neither original nor new. In 1623 Francis Bacon wrote:

'It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter'.

The discussions may well address two issues. Firstly how best to handle central, or bulk, purchasing. Despite our faltering start there is general agreement this form of saving must be pursued and the team leaders' meeting in February gave strong support to taking this forward. Secondly, the future image of mountain rescue continues to be raised and questioned. There is no doubt that mountain rescue has achieved the position and status it currently enjoys because it is mountain rescue with all the history of its performance behind it. This, I believe must be central to any discussions of the future.

'The future is unknowable, but the past should give us hope. (If we care to look.)'
W S Churchill

Finally, I wish to recognise the support that mountain and cave rescue receive from UKSAR. We are very well represented at every level of UKSAR and, during 2010, a volunteers working group was formed in order that the concerns and issues affecting the voluntary elements of SAR in the UK can be fully discussed and the shared views presented to the operators group. The voices of mountain and cave rescue are therefore noted and will effectively play a part in the shaping of future plans for search and rescue operations on land in the UK.

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CASBAGS
Following some discussion with the manufacturer, about the material selection for the next generation of casbags, we now require feedback on how the casualty finds the bag. Please can teams, if appropriate after the rescue, ask their casualties how warm they were during the evacuation.

SIGNIFICANT EVENT REVIEW

We are introducing a Significant Event Form – now available to download from the Equipment section of the Members area. The form invites information including the date of both the event and the cold debrief, the general qualifications of those present, what happened, why, the learning outcomes and a brief summary of any proposed action plan. The idea is to capture problems

so, if they continue and a theme is identified, we can let teams know. A database will be created of all events submitted. Team names will remain confidential but details will be accessible if needed.

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT FITZROY AND ALPAMAYO JACKETS

At the May meeting, the Equipment sub took a look at the sample Mountain Equipment Fitzroy and Alpamayo jackets with provisional placement of logos and badging. Figures 1 and 2 show the back of the Fitzroy featuring the Mountain Rescue badge. (This will be lowered approx 100mm, to clear the hood.) Figure 3 shows the MREW logo in position on the sleeve. (We have asked if this can be placed on both sleeves to allow teams to position their badges on the chest. We are waiting to hear if this is possible.) Figures 4 and 5 show the Alpamayo, the women's version of the jacket.



FIGURES 1-3: MEN'S FITZROY JACKET
FIGURES 4-5: WOMEN'S ALPAMAYO JACKET



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

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 19 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
01796 862335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

TRAIN THE TRAINERS
Places: 30
Date: Sunday 20 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ Hutton
Contact: Huw Birrell
huwbirrell@aol.com

MEDIA SKILLS
Places: 30
Date: Sunday 20 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ Hutton
Contact: Mike Margeson
01229 889721
mmargeson@hotmail.com

DATES 2011

EQUIPMENT E-GROUP OVERHAUL!

Finally, the e-group undergoes an overhaul at the end of July. All existing members will be removed and I would ask that all team equipment officers register so we can send information direct to them. Any queries about equipment news, please email Richard on richard@terrell.orangehome.co.uk.

PLEA FROM HUW BIRRELL ON BEHALF OF THE TRAINING GROUP

1992 AND ALL THAT STUFF..

1992: George Bush was elected President, it was a Leap Year, Whitney Houston topped the charts with 'I will always love you' and, most importantly, the MRC (as was) reviewed the

guidelines for being a member of a mountain rescue team, or a party leader. As we all know, things move on. To adhere to data protection guidelines, things held must be relevant. If you SMART plan something, it must be timely and, for no other reason, the Training sub believe it's time we reviewed the guidelines again.

TEAMS PROVIDE ADVENTURE DAY FOR PRINCES' CHARITIES

Peak District teams will host a day full of outdoor adventures for disadvantaged children in support of charities affiliated to The Duke of Cambridge on 22 July. The PDMRO, Derbyshire CRO and SARDA will entertain three charities which support children in difficult circumstances, all of which are patronised by either Prince William or Prince Harry. The charities include Centrepoint, which provides a range of accommodation services for socially excluded homeless young people; Wellchild, which helps children and families manage the consequences of serious illness; and the Child Bereavement Charity, for families affected by the loss of a child or children suffering bereavement. 'Mountain rescue has been involved in similar events since 2009,' said Neil Roden of PDMRO. 'Prince William is our patron and he has always been keen for us to work with other charities to create opportunities together and also to promote our work.' The day will consist of a number of simultaneous activities in different areas, culminating in a meal at Edale's base in Hope. Beneficiaries of the three charities will take part in the events, which include a high ropes course, climbing and abseiling, cave exploration, search dog training, mock rescues and hiking. Local businesses are supporting the event by providing facilities, equipment, food and gifts. 'This is a fantastic opportunity for the teams, above and below ground, to create a unique day out for these young people and their families,' concludes Neil.



PRINCE WILLIAM WITH SEARCH DOG CORRIE IN PATERDALE

SUNDAY, 20 NOVEMBER LANCS POLICE HQ, HUTTON

The two courses will be run on the same day. Cost for each is £150 per head and both attract a 50% subsidy from MREW, to be refunded to teams.

TRAIN THE TRAINER

Not just for team training officers, this course is aimed at any team member who might run, or help to run, team training events. The day includes theory, workshop and practical exercises, with the opportunity for peer feedback. To book: huwbirrell@aol.com



IMAGES: CENTRAL BEACONS MRT & MIKE MARGESON

MEDIA INTERVIEW SKILLS

Find out how journalists gather news and learn how to survive close scrutiny from the TV cameras. The course includes interviews and analysis, hints and tips for the future from those who work in the media. To book: mmargeson@hotmail.com



Bookings in writing on team letterhead, with two official team signatures. Please make cheques payable to 'Mountain Rescue Council'.

'Who are we to say who can do what?' I hear ask, and I agree. To that end I'm sending all teams a message: Tell us what you think the relevant needs are NOW for these roles. What you do in MR has changed dramatically and we need to look at what YOU want, to fulfil the needs of YOUR membership. Let us reach a consensus on the matter and common ground will prevail. What suits a team in a more mountainous area may not be

another team's priority but let's get together and see what we want most. It may be the present guidelines are fit for purpose. If so, great! If not, let's have a look at revising them. You know what you want, just let us know – several people from different regions will have a look at the results and, through consultation, we'll come up with the answer. It should be an interesting process. Please email Huw at HuwBirrell@aol.com.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

David Allan

Since taking on the role of chairman, a number of things have happened I had not anticipated but an invitation to the Royal Wedding was the least expected of all. Surprise was quickly replaced by anticipation of something very special. (Sheila: new dress, new hat, new shoes etc.) The atmosphere from the time of arrival in London was almost palpable and the rows of people camping on the gravel along the Mall reinforced this. All the representatives from the Princes' Charity Forum were given the opportunity to talk to the media and a rather hectic round followed. The BBC was very helpful, although the 'One Show' didn't quite turn out as expected. I had visited Westminster Abbey a number of times previously but this occasion brought

the abbey to life with colours and music to reflect the mood of the day. As we have come to expect, Prince William injected an element of informality into the pomp and circumstance of the day. The organisation of the whole event was faultless from start to finish, the intense security carried out with good humour in concert with the atmosphere at large. The 'Met' frequently take a lot of criticism but this occasion was handled exceedingly well. Leaving the abbey, we continued to be surprised by the breadth of interest. We were waylaid by Norwegian TV, French TV and numbers of enthusiastic amateur video-wielding people from around the globe. We had offers of up to \$100 for our Orders of Service from transatlantic visitors! Lasting memories; the party atmosphere

TOP LEFT: THE ROYAL ESCORT PREPARES TO LEAVE THE BRIDE'S HOUSE
TOP RIGHT: PRINCE HARRY (SCOTT WOMACK), PHILIPPA MIDDLETON (JAYNE SIDDEL) KATE (HANNAH DODGSON) AND PRINCE WILLIAM (KHAN DURNALL) WITH KENDAL TEAM VEHICLE, MOBILE 1



CHILDREN PAY TRIBUTE TO THE ROYAL WEDDING

School children from Grayrigg Primary School near Kendal joined in the Royal Wedding build up with a fun 'Royal Wedding' of their own. The day before the real event gripped the nation and, with the help of teachers and parents, the children organised their own special day, which included dressing up as members of the Royal Family and the bride's family.

Scott Womack, whose dad is in the Kendal team, asked if they could provide a vehicle as escort for the wedding car, as it made its way from the bride's home to the school. What with the 'real' Royal groom, HRH Prince William of Wales, being patron of Mountain Rescue England and Wales, how could the team refuse?

Kendal team's newest vehicle was duly dispatched and led the wedding car on the four mile journey. The service was held in St John's church, where the Reverend Mike Shepherd conducted the ceremony and explained to the children the importance of the big day.

The wedding party then moved across to the village hall for the reception. Food included red, white and blue cupcakes made by the children, plus the wedding cake which was decorated by the Reception class children. As with all these things, there were the usual speeches and 'wedding photo' opportunities to be had then the children did what they do best – headed for the playground for some fun and games.



INTRODUCING THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE PHOTO: HUGO BURNDON ©CLARENCE HOUSE

across the city, the colours in the abbey reinforced by uniforms and dresses, the noise from the crowd drowning the music in the abbey when William and Kate stepped out, and the sense of fun that Princes William and Harry brought to the occasion. PS. The cake was delicious. We considered dividing it into small pieces for each team but decided that was impractical.

NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

Reports and pics

The following pen picture reports give a brief overview of some of the workshop opportunities available on the day. From feedback received, the revamped style of the day seemed to work and there has been positive feedback of the delivery and content of the sessions. The move to each subcommittee providing a workshop of two hours, repeated in the afternoon, is much more realistic and achievable than our previous Round Robin model. It also provides opportunity for both attendees and workshop providers to substantially cover a topic.

We had 154 attend the training day and, on the back of these numbers and feedback, we're already planning next year's event. Considering only a few years ago we cancelled this day due to lack of numbers, this is particularly encouraging. I would like to thank Plas y Brenin and MTT for hosting this event and making us, as ever, very welcome, and to all the workshop providers for their hard work in preparation and delivery of their sessions.

Other sessions included a great session on pulley systems and an update on SARMAN run by Ewan Thomas, on behalf of Mark Lewis. Ewan's planned water session was delivered by an instructor. Finally, thank you to Richard Prideaux for his hard work.

MIKE MARGESON MREW TRAINING OFFICER



So that everyone would get something tangible from the session, each person attending was invited to submit two questions concerning PPE, to which they'd like answers. Although most were answered on the day, I thought the questions asked to be representative of those other team members might ask.

Of all of the questions asked, the most frequent enquiry concerned use (or otherwise) of items of PPE and, in particular, harness, helmets and

BILL BATSON MBE CRO & LYON EQUIPMENT: EQUIPMENT USE AND MISUSE

ropes. This came as something of a surprise as the answer to the questions concerning the maximum lifetime of PPE is provided in the user instructions manufacturers are legally bound to provide with their products. It's perhaps worth mentioning that user instructions are not purely limited to the operation of an item, but also include guidance on care, maintenance and obsolescence. It's all there in the small print...

I'd like to thank everyone for their contribution and enthusiastic participation in the session and, in particular, Derek Keegan of Dublin Wicklow MRT, who provided answers to a number of questions I couldn't.

So, in no particular order, the questions/answers are as follows:

Q: How is the strength of a rope affected by being wet?

A nylon rope that becomes thoroughly wet will lose approximately 10% of its strength when dry. A wet rope is also less well able to absorb impact due to the hydraulic lock caused by water molecules trapped within the nylon fibres. However, this process, and the loss of strength, is reversed when the rope is dries out.

Q: What is the service life of a harness?

This varies from manufacturer to manufacturer. All manufacturers are, however, required to provide information on lifetime and obsolescence of the items of PPE they make. This information will be in the product information/user

instructions that came with the product. The maximum in-use life span for harnesses is typically between five and ten years. If you've lost the user instructions, speak to the supplier or distributor of the product for clarification.

Q: How much stronger is a Figure of 8 if it's set properly?

It depends how badly dressed and set it is. Strength given for knotted ropes assumes the knot has been correctly dressed and set. If you want to achieve this strength it is important you tie your knots neatly and securely.

Q: What is the lifespan of a karabiner – from date of purchase or manufacture?

Many manufacturers now give a potentially unlimited life to metal items

DARYL GARFIELD MREW VEHICLE OFFICER: VEHICLES AND DRIVING

An enjoyable day was had by about 50 personnel over the two sessions, with the weather only adding to the realism of the scenario. We were pleased Land Rover had provided us with one of their instructors for the day. He covered the basic principles and parts of the Land Rover, and winching. And there were practical demonstrations on securing the vehicle and changing a wheel in an off road environment, including different jacking techniques. Look forward to seeing you again next year!



HEADLINE PHOTO: KESWICK MRT LAND ROVER PHOTO (LEFT): DARYL GARFIELD

DAVE JONES OGWEN VALLEY MRO TECHNICAL: ROPE RESCUE

When we were asked to run a technical session on High Angle Rope Rescue, the main challenge was deciding what aspect was of interest to all teams and to run it in the two hours allowed. We decided to tie in with the draft rope rescue guidelines currently being discussed at the MREW training group and run three sessions: Lowered Pick Off (and convert to raise), Abseil Pick Off, and Vertical Stretcher Lower (and convert to raise with Pitch and Pivot edge transition for those already familiar with the fundamental principles of twin line operation using brake rack and tandem prussic).

There was sufficient time for plenty of hands-on experience. Each session started with a run-through description of the system, especially system redundancy, different focal points for main and safety and built with a 10:1 static safety factor included.

After a demonstration of the system in operation, the delegates were invited to operate the system themselves with Ogwen members on hand to provide coaching and guidance where necessary. This gave MREW members the opportunity to try a system with which they may have been unfamiliar, and hopefully provide some areas of debate later in the bar!

The focus of the day was on the underlying principles, and encouraging everyone to examine their own systems and see if they comply with the proposed MREW Rope Rescue Guidelines. I hope the challenge was completed successfully and everyone came away with either something to think about or having tried something new. I would like to thank all those who so actively participated and particularly the members of Ogwen Valley MRO for running the session. If there are any further questions following the session, you are more than welcome to contact me at techrescue.officer@ogwen-rescue.org.uk.



PHOTOS: DAVE JONES



such as karabiners. However you should always read the user instructions that come with all items of PPE, including karabiners, for confirmation of the lifespan for the karabiners you are using.

Q: Do stickers actually cause critical structural problems on helmets?

Helmet manufacturers will generally advise against placing stickers, or writing with indelible pens, on helmets. This is because, without knowing the properties of the sticker adhesive or solvents within the ink of the indelible pen, the manufacture cannot guarantee this won't have a detrimental affect on the helmet's shell. Where the manufacturer has placed stickers on their own helmets,

they will have first ensured – through exhaustive testing – that the sticker adhesive used is helmet friendly.

Q: Are all helmets as safe as each other?

Not necessarily. Different categories of helmets are required to meet the different requirements of the European Norm (standard) that applies to that particular category of helmet. The performance requirements of an EN 397 'working at height' helmet are significantly different to the requirements of an EN 12492 helmet for mountaineers, which are different again to the requirements of an EN 3185 white water sports helmet. There may also be considerable variation in design features of helmets meeting the same Euro Norm even though

they all meet the requirements of the same standard. Consider a Petzl Ecrin Roc vs Petzl Metor3 – both comfortably satisfy the requirements of EN 12492, yet are significantly different in design.

Q: What is the expected life of products?

First of all – read the user instructions that came with the item. Details of the maximum in-use life will be recorded here. Next, consider the frequency and type of use the item has been subjected to. Has the function been affected? Consider also the storage conditions of the item when in use. Finally, carry out regular inspections of your rescue and climbing equipment. Make your decision on how long you will use the item based on each of the preceding

criteria. However, do not exceed the manufacturer's maximum in-use life recommendation.

Q: At what point should rope be retired?

See the previous answer – the same rules apply.

Q: Should we use any personal equipment in the MR environment?

Difficult question as the answer depends on the financial situation in individual teams. In the perfect world, all equipment used during training and incidents would be provided, and therefore controlled, by the team in question. Sadly however, for the vast majority of teams, the financial constraints under which teams must operate prevent this.



DR WILLIAM LUMB BCRC MEDICAL OFFICER: MEDICAL WORKSHOP

Approx forty persons, in two groups, explored current issues in rescue medicine including the new oxygen guidelines where supplemental oxygen should only be given to all critically injured patients and those significantly ill/injured persons where either pulse oximetry is not available or, if available, where the result is less than 94% on air. The new immersion guidelines were reviewed, along with looking at the lack of evidence of Suspension Trauma as a medical entity (although fainting upright is clearly bad for you and can be fatal in as little as 5-20 mins). The groups also reviewed the correct use of tourniquets and ran through the latest guidelines from Scotland in avalanche medicine. Following a practical triage exercise there was a general discussion and presentation as to why triage is important in MR medicine and that we may well all need to perform at some point in our MR careers.

PHOTO: CENTRAL BEACONS MRT

THE EXEC: WHAT DID THEY EVER DO FOR YOU?

Now's your chance to find out!

If you've ever wondered who those invisible people were, beavering away on your behalf at national level (or even, dare we say it, doubted their very existence), here's your chance to find out. This is by no means a definitive list but it's a page-worth of key people – and it certainly doesn't mean the ones not detailed further aren't also beavering away on your behalf. The plan is to update this on a regular basis as projects develop so watch this space....



CHAIRMAN: DAVID ALLAN

EMAIL: allan986@btinternet.com

Represents the interests of mountain rescue to the Government, the emergency services and other SAR organisations and The Princes' Charities Forum. Currently involved with the BMC and MLTE in the development of a national Safety Forum and, with Daryl Garfield, is seeking to establish national guidelines for team vehicle livery.



SECRETARY: PETER SMITH

EMAIL: secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Acts as an interface between teams, regions and the national body, records and produces minutes at MREW meetings and generally deals with reams of admin. Currently taking bookings for the Medical Seminar.



TREASURER: PENNY BROCKMAN

EMAIL: treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Besides ensuring the smooth running of MREW finances, is currently working with Insurance Officer Neil Woodhead, the insurers and police authorities to thrash out better deals for us in insurance, and with the fundraising group and Tony Rich to secure sponsorship deals to benefit team members.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY: PETER HOWELLS

EMAIL: assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Organises MREW search/management courses, represents us on the Youth United National Committee and co-ordinates our role in the UK MR conferences – currently working with Leeds Metropolitan University for 2012, and also working with Peter Smith on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee initiatives.



PRESS OFFICER: ANDY SIMPSON

EMAIL: press@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Represents MREW to the national press, TV and radio, liaises with Clarence House regarding any Royal involvement in MR, supports teams in their own publicity, advises on corporate identity, and works with the fundraising group to further sponsorship deals with companies such as Goodyear – currently helping develop the relationship with Go Outdoors.



FUNDRAISING: MIKE FRANCE

EMAIL: nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Chairs the fundraising group to develop revenue and PR opportunities and further sponsorship deals with a variety of companies – currently developing the relationship with Go Outdoors. Also acts as the link with the Princes' charities representing us at key events such as the recent polo match featuring Audi UK vs Prince William's team, Umbongo.



WATER: EWAN THOMAS

EMAIL: water@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Liaises with DEFRA and the fire service in the development of guidelines for water rescue, training and best practice. Currently creating a central register of water resources.



EQUIPMENT: RICHARD TERRELL

EMAIL: equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Looks at all things equipment, reviewing, researching and liaising with suppliers and manufacturers and is currently involved in development of the new stretcher project.



MEDICAL: JOHN ELLERTON

EMAIL: medical@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Represents the interests of mountain rescue in medical matters to government, the emergency services and ICAR, and maintains the 'morphine' licence. Currently looking at possibilities for updating the Casualty Care handbook and conducts mountain medicine research.



VEHICLES: DARYL GARFIELD

EMAIL: vehicles@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Currently reviewing all things vehicle oriented and liaising with the police, Department of Transport and other relevant bodies in the process. So... driver competency guidelines, fleet insurance, blue lights and sirens, vehicle livery guidelines (and negotiation of a better deal for MR teams)...



COMMS: MARK LEWIS

EMAIL: communications@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Aims to develop better comms technology for MR, most notably working with Mapyx to provide mapping systems. Also sits on the UKSAR Comms working group.



TRAINING: MIKE MARGESON

EMAIL: trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Recently instrumental in creating the MREW Rope Rescue Guidelines and successfully re-establishing a national training day at Plas y Brenin. Currently initiating and developing new courses, such as media skills and 'train the trainers' and updating party leader and team member guidelines.



CENTRAL PURCHASING: NEIL RODEN

EMAIL: purchasing@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Chairs the Forward Planning Group, looking at how and where mountain rescue sees itself in the future, part of which involves developing a central purchasing policy. Currently part of the team working with Go Outdoors developing ideas for fundraising and gear testing.



INSURANCE: NEIL 'WOODIE' WOODHEAD

EMAIL: insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Currently reviewing all insurances related to mountain rescue, and everything involved with it, including developing guidance notes and presentations for teams, looking at a scheme for vehicle insurance and possible enhancements to personal accident cover.



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PLUS...



INSURANCE MATTERS

Neil 'Woodie' Woodhead

insurance

@mountain.rescue.org.uk

The police funded personal accident (PA) policies continue to cause many queries. If your calling police authority has signed up to the new mountain and cave rescue policy, please take time to look at the guidance notes on the website – they will hopefully answer some questions, but may also generate more discussion.

As of the end of May, the police authorities signed up are Cumbria, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Durham, and North Wales should have done so by the time you read this. Others are due later in the year, as and when current arrangements are due for renewal.

Some police authorities have elected not to take up this policy but to continue with alternative arrangements. I would urge teams and regions to make sure they know exactly what cover they are receiving. PA insurance is very important to team members and, as we are all volunteers carrying out SAR ops for our friends in the police, we must push for the best cover we can obtain and not simply the lowest premium. You need to ask many questions including what benefits you would get if you suffered an injury, what exclusions apply, what the operative time is defined as, and whether you are covered whilst training, fundraising and other MR activities in addition to call-outs.

The civil liability policy can also be found on the website, where you will now find a document giving guidance on what fundraising activities are automatically covered and which need to be referred. Fundraising was always a personal concern for me, so I'm delighted we have agreed a framework to work within. Please make sure you look at this document – it gives you more certainty when arranging fundraising events. You may find you're paying a premium elsewhere for cover already in place through MREW. Or you may find you aren't covered when you thought you were. Now is the time to find out – not when someone suffers an injury and makes a claim against your team.

What our liability insurers, RSA, like to see is that you are organising fundraising and training activities professionally and making effective use of risk management. This isn't a tick box exercise where a generic form will suffice – you need to look at the risks involved with different events/activities and manage these effectively. We do this automatically on a call-out with our dynamic risk assessments and it's essentially the same but you have more time to consider it. Identify the hazards, decide who might be harmed and how, evaluate the risks and decide on precautions, record your findings and implement them – then review and update as necessary. Keep it simple. Consider the likelihood of something happening and the consequences stemming from it – then manage it.

Whilst we're thinking about risk

assessments, remember how important a dynamic one can be on a call-out. As one team member in South Wales discovered when being the only team member to wear his helmet on a steep slope search saved him from a nasty head injury. Those who saw his helmet at the National Training Day will appreciate how that could have been his head. A great example of dynamic risk assessment for him!

This also raises some interesting debate when team leaders and incident controllers consider the use of non-MR personnel. Do you ever utilise them? It could be members of the public who assist you with a search due to local knowledge – but how do you manage the risks and is it worth the risks? Do you record their involvement in the incident logs?

Perhaps you use SARDA dog teams where the handler isn't in a mountain rescue team. Do you know whether they are insured? How do you utilise this resource and do you allow them to assist with a casualty evacuation following a find? They may be highly trained dog handlers, but how do you know whether they are trained and competent to be on the hill, working alongside your own trained team members? The deployment of any non-MR personnel is likely to require additional risk management.

The last area I'd like you to think about is one where you may shoot my head off for raising it above the parapet – please don't! Vehicle insurance. Yes, I know they are your team's vehicles, they are your responsibility and you have the insurable interest. Let's not talk about fleet insurance as we don't have a fleet – let's talk about vehicle insurance. Shouldn't we look to find economies of scale that benefit us all, possibly by a specific scheme, funded centrally in some way through MREW? Doesn't that interest your team? I'm not necessarily talking about 'the government grant' many of you have mentioned to me – there may be other ways and means of funding this. Don't you agree it's something we should be investigating?

As well as trying to contain the overall spend on vehicle insurance, we could strive for better cover and better customer service. An insurer with a scheme covering 100+ mountain and cave rescue vehicles will more likely listen to our views, than an insurer covering a handful of vehicles here and there.

At the end of the day they are your vehicles, it's your policy and you decide how to pay the premium. But please give due consideration into looking at a centrally funded scheme for all our benefits.

As always, if you have any queries, please email insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk and I'll give you what help and assistance I can. But please be patient if I don't respond immediately – my email isn't attached to my hand as it is with some people, and I'll be away in late August.



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PELI UK launch redesigned website

Peli Products UK have a brand new, redesigned website. The slick, new-look site allows quick access to product information on Protector Cases, MicroCases, Peli Storm cases, Peli Torches and Area Lights as well as providing all the latest Peli news. It also allows Peli cases and torches to be viewed in a 3D rotation so all sides of the product can be studied.

Customers have the specifications on each model at their fingertips and also a Live Chat option (during office hours) ensuring they can make an informed and accurate buying decision. CEO Eric Breeze explained, 'As our

ranges continue to expand, so the need for comprehensive information on each product also grows. We aim to give our customers and potential customers the best possible service, both in person and online, reflecting the quality of our products through high standards of customer care.'

The website is designed to be easily navigable whilst being informative and fun and gives an insight into the personality of the company. No call centres, no telephone menus – just human beings! And the website lists the names and profiles of all Peli personnel so they can be contacted directly. Check it out at peliproducs.co.uk.



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ISS would like to thank the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service for their kind permission to use this photograph

REGIONAL NEWS

LAKE DISTRICT

MBE FOR COCKERMOUTH LEADER MIKE PARK

Mike, a Cumbrian lad with mountain rescue seemingly running through his veins, was awarded the honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June. Cockermouth team leader for the last four years, and a member of the team for 28, he followed in the mountain rescue footsteps of his father Jack Park, who was a member for fifteen years. Local newspaper News & Star paid a moving tribute to Mike which, quite frankly, is difficult to top! 'Mike is known by everyone in Cumbria as a man prepared, at any time of day or night, to put his own life on hold for the benefit of others. In fire and flood, on fell and in dale, in tragedy and reassuring rescue, Mike Park is the epitome of the most deserving of honours recipients. His own safety is of secondary consideration when set against that of those who need his help. No doubt he'll feel today's honour is deserved by the whole of his team, not by him alone. None in Cumbria would argue with that - we would simply offer congratulations and thanks.'

And, predictably, Mike echoed those very words. 'This did come as surprise to me. I understand that these things are given to individuals and not groups, but it really is the entire team that deserve this honour, as they are the ones who do all the hard work - I just do the grinning! I feel this is another example of mountain rescue being recognised at long last, and this is down of all the excellent effort being put in behind the scenes by individuals across the MR community - this can do nothing but good.'

'Although this is an honour, we don't do mountain rescue for awards - it's about helping people, with a bunch of mates, and making sure everybody is enjoying themselves (including the casualty) and, most important of all, it's not taking yourself or others too seriously and to always smile.'

And despite increasing calls on his team's time, and some pretty major events over the last few years - including widespread flooding, the Derrick Bird shootings and the Keswick school bus crash - he reckons he's enjoyed every single moment with the Cockermouth team. Well done Mike!



JUST HANGIN' AROUND: MIKE PARK MBE - ON THE ROPES AND STILL GRINNING!

size drum kit, speakers, amps and a three metre square sausage stall up Pendle Hill, I'm sure we can get a Bell stretcher up there a lot easier than we have in the past!

BOLTON BLESSING FOR THREE TEAM LAND ROVERS, A MINIBUS AMBULANCE AND A BOAT

May saw team members, friends and colleagues at Bolton MRT base for an evening with a difference: the official handover, blessing and dedication of three brand new team vehicles, along with the team's minibus ambulance, acquired last year, and their search and rescue boat. Principal guests of honour were the East Lancashire Mark Masons (whose £40K donation went towards the vehicles purchased), Edgworth Real Ale Festival Committee (£12K funding for the boat and one



stretcher), the Keep Fit Association of Chorley and Leyland (donation of two stretchers), Bolton CVS (£3K towards new vehicles), Chris Baldwin at ASDA Bolton (£10K for new team clothing), and Greater Manchester Police (donation of the minibus ambulance). The Rev Janet French blessed each of the Land Rovers (named The Mark Mason, Tony McNally II and Miss Ellen Sykes 'Nellie'), the minibus and boat, as well as Rossendale and Pendle's new Land Rover Discovery.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Several members of the Bolton team were presented MPSRO Long Service Awards in May, in recognition of many years' service to mountain rescue. Amongst them were Life Vice President Tony McNally, for twenty years, and Mike Marsh, who received the MREW Long Service Award for twenty five years. Team leader, Garry Rhodes MBE was also presented with the MPSRO Long Service Award, recognising his thirty years in the team.

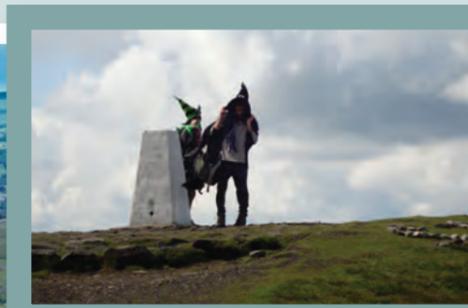
PEAK DISTRICT

BUXTON TEAM'S NEW TRANSIT IS THE PEAK OF PERFECTION

The versatility of Ford's All Wheel Drive Transit Minibus is set to make life easier for Buxton MRT. The new vehicle, from GK Group Chesterfield, will get team members closer to where they're needed, even in the depths of winter. Deputy team leader Malcolm Needham said, 'Our old Transit was a lifeline, but this new one is All Wheel Drive and that will be a huge help in the sort of weather we experienced last winter. It took a lot of tin-rattling to raise the money to buy the new minibus - we've been fundraising like mad, even though Ford and GK Group have given us an excellent deal.' The



WITCH WAY NOW?
PHOTO: CHRIS SHILTON (SHILTONPHOTO.CO.UK)



MID PENNINE

IT'S EVERY WITCH WAY ON PENDLE

Rossendale & Pendle MRT hosted an event with a difference in June when they invited a thousand witches onto the iconic Lancashire Hill with the promise of a prize for the best-dressed! What with live music and a DJ, a sausage stand AND a commemorative T-shirt, how could they resist? Sadly, the numbers weren't quite as high as hoped (doubtless a broomstick jam on the M65) but those who went along had fun, ate a few hot dogs, threw a few shapes to the band, and popped a bob or two into the team's new base fund at the same time.

The team also discovered it can drive vehicles three quarters of the way up the hill so rescues should be a lot easier in future. Team leader Andy Simpson said, 'If we can get a band with instruments, a full



SHAUN WOOD (GK GROUP) PRESENTS THE NEW OPERATIONAL VEHICLE KEYS TO MALC NEEDHAM, DEPUTY TEAM LEADER, BUXTON MRT

Transit Minibus began life as a 15-seater with a 140 PS 2.4 TDCi engine, but a row of seats was removed to facilitate the stowage of equipment and allow for a stretcher. Further work involved the fitment of blue lights and sirens, radio equipment and other emergency-service gear. Shaun Wood, GK Group commercial sales manager, said, 'It has been a delight to supply such an out-of-the-ordinary vehicle to the team. The minibus looks great finished in silver and, with all the equipment it carries, it will be a reassuring presence in the Peak District for many years to come. It show Ford can deliver a vehicle to pretty much any specification a customer might require.' The Buxton Transit will become a familiar sight at shows and events in the area throughout the summer – its first outing at the High Peak Emergency Services Display Day at the Pavilion Gardens, Buxton in June.

GIANT GENEROSITY TO THE RESCUE

When Huddersfield based consultant osteomyologist Dr Emma Kirke chose to give her support to a local mountain rescue team, she could not know her idea would grow way beyond her initial expectations. Life-long rugby fan Emma, sponsors Huddersfield Giants' half back Danny Brough. She approached Danny to get involved and he was only too happy to join in, donating one of his shirts for sale at auction for the benefit of **Woodhead MRT**. The shirt was just the start. In the event, a number of items went up for auction at The Star Inn, Fenay Bridge in June, raising a whopping £1876.90 for the team (not including

WOODHEAD TEAM MEMBERS AT THE GIANTS STADIUM PHOTOS: JOHN HOWE & WAYNE THACKRAY

sales of beer). Giants commercial manager Paul Cribb said, 'Huddersfield Giants has recently been looking at supporting local charities. Emma's enthusiasm, combined with recent press and TV reports, drew our attention to Woodhead and provided us with this opportunity to help out. It's a pleasure to be of service to those that selflessly serve others.' And it didn't stop there, Emma even managed to secure two tickets to the British Super Bikes championships at Oulton Park on 17 July! In fact, the scale of giving has been tremendous. Emma said, 'To me mountain rescue are heroes and I'm sure the people they help feel the same way too. They give a lot of themselves, in so many ways. I'm sure it doesn't seem so big to them but I admire all they do, and just wanted to help a bit.' Peak District Brewers, Bradfield Brewery, also donated a barrel of their very popular Farmers Pale Ale, specially rebranded as 'Rescue Ale', with the proceeds going to the team. The 5% ABV tippie always goes down well!

Woodhead chairman John Howe said, 'I am touched by the enthusiasm and generosity of people for this project; it's overwhelming. I would like to say a very big thank you to Emma, the Huddersfield Giants, Danny Brough, Sarah Lyon, Aura Print UK and everyone else who worked to make this night a huge success. Let's hope this is the start of a very good partnership between the Giants and Woodhead Mountain Rescue Team.'

WOODHEAD GO RED FOR NATIONAL AWARENESS DAY

The May Bank Holiday marked the second national Mountain and Cave Rescue Awareness Day and this year Woodhead team members encouraged people to 'Go Red for Woodhead' and show their support by wearing something red on the day. A warm but breezy Bank Holiday saw hundreds of visitors to Cannon Hall Farm who, hopefully, had a few perceptions changed about the work of mountain rescue.

There was a variety of activities, with live music provided by ex-team member Tony Sturdy and his ceilidh band, in the morning, and the Barnsley Metropolitan Brass Band (resplendent in their red and gold tunics) in the afternoon, and Penistone FM Roadshow were on hand to provide even more

music, interviews and local information. The team's two search and rescue dogs wowed the crowds with their agility, speed and intelligence demonstrating how they find lost and injured people.

An orienteering course tested navigation and fitness, free 'map and compass' training, a display of vehicles and kit, video and photo displays. Team members also gave first aid demonstrations. The visitors' powers of observation were tested with an array of household items hidden in obvious, and some not so obvious, places to win a prize. There were cake and craft stalls and the chance to buy Woodhead MRT-themed goodies.

The undoubted star of the show was a visit by the South Yorkshire Police Helicopter. The MD902 Explorer swooped in and landed next to the main picnic area and visitors were invited to look round the aircraft and have a photo or two taken. A good day had by all!



THE PITH HELMETS TAKE A BREAK FROM PROCEEDINGS FOR A SPOT OF FORMATION POSING

'CHOCKS AWAY!' FOR MOUNTAIN

June also saw Woodhead team members devising new ways to entertain the crowds and display their mountain rescue skills in the form of stretcher display team The Pith Helmets. Visitors to the Honley Show saw these stretcher-bearers-with-a-difference perform a variety of manoeuvres to music, with one or two surprises thrown in. 'My favourite,' said team leader Keith Wakeley, 'was the historic flight, which had me in stitches!' Vice chairman Pete Stott explains, 'It was the brainchild of the team fundraising officer – a cross between the Red Arrows and the White Helmets, but without motorbikes or aeroplanes!

'Mountain rescue is a serious business but to let our hair down, yet also entertain and raise awareness is too good an opportunity to miss.' Pith Helmets member, trainee Lesley Gill, said, 'It's great fun and a wonderful workout. We move quickly with the stretchers, and the routine lasts about fifteen minutes. Very tiring!'

'The many hours of practice required demonstrates the level of commitment, discipline, strength, stamina and teamwork required at the sharp end of modern mountain rescue teams' adds Keith.



KINDER TEAM MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS PROMOTE THE BALL AT HAYFIELD MAY QUEEN. BANNER KINDLY DONATED BY HIGH PEAK SIGNS

KINDER MRT LAUNCH RUBY BALL APPEAL

Kinder MRT have launched their appeal for funds to enable them to update their two team ambulances and look at buying a new vehicle in the future. On Saturday 24 September, they will be holding a Ruby Ball to celebrate the team's 40th Anniversary at The Barcelo Shrigley Hall Hotel, Pott Shrigley, Cheshire. It's a black tie and ball gowns event, with three course dinner, music by Le Funk and vocalist Laura Jayne Hunter, a raffle/auction, guest speakers and much more. Tickets are £40 – or you can book a group tables. Both are available from Sally Barnett on 07742 811938, or through Chinley Post Office. All proceeds on the night will go to the appeal and it promises to be a great night for the team and guests alike.

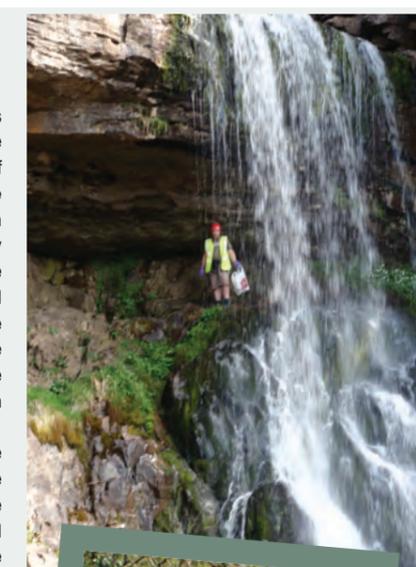
EXTREME LITTER PICKING AND A GRAND RAFFLE

Visitors to the Ingleton Waterfalls Trail on Monday 25 April were bemused to witness members of the **Cave Rescue Organisation** hanging from ropes above the gorges as they undertook their regular 'Extreme Litter Pick'. Members volunteered their time to help clean up the more inaccessible areas of the 4.5 mile Trail and in just three hours collected twenty big bin bags of rubbish.

The Ingleton Waterfalls Trail gave the team the best spot at the head of the car park to set up the trailer, where visitors could find out more about their fell and cave rescue activity. Team members passed out copies of the team's incident and activity report for the last year – 2010 was a busy year for them as they attended 70 fell and cave rescues, plus they celebrated their 75th anniversary, enjoyed a visit by the Duke of York and achieved the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

During the litter pick, the team also launched their 2011 Grand Raffle, selling an amazing 275 tickets during the day. The raffle is open to all and will be drawn on 28 September. Local businesses have donated some fantastic prizes and the first prize is two week's accommodation in a villa in Florida, donated by Zoe Ketteridge who was rescued by the team in February 2009 and has gone onto to become one of their biggest fundraisers. Tickets are £1 each and can be obtained by emailing heathereastwood66@hotmail.co.uk. Details of all the prizes can be found on the CRO website at www.cro.org.uk.

The Extreme Litter Pick occurred during one of the busiest weeks of the year for CRO with a total of eight rescues – starting with a sheep rescue on 22 April followed by a mountain bike accident the same day, and ending with a walker, a motorcyclist and another walker on the 29th.



Marco and the MCA

Continuing a relationship which dates back to 1998, Marco Trailers were tasked with the manufacture and supply of trailers to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Due to its size, ease of handling and ability to be trailed by the MCA's fleet of Ford Focus sized vehicles, six Marco X25 2.5 metre exhibition trailers were chosen to replace four X45 4.5 metre training and PR units previously supplied and the role changed to PR use only.

The new brief was to supply six 2.5 metre units capable of being trailed by a small family saloon car and, when uncoupled from the towing vehicle, be easily manoeuvred on varying terrain by not more than one or two MCA volunteers. The trailer had to be quick and easy to set up, carry enough promotional material to display the role of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and also promote safe maritime practice. When the order was placed in March 2004, the final specification included full wrap body graphics, digitally printed graphics panels, flags, headboard, full length brochure display with integral storage and leaflet dispensers.

Together with the latest flat screen technology, sound system and DVD player the MCA X25's attract attention by all means possible. The trailers are to be used at events throughout the country and will be taken to some of the most remote parts of the UK proving that, wherever they go the MCA, via the Marco X25, are sure to be noticed. To find out more, go to marcotrailers.co.uk or email rob@marcotrailers.co.uk.



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Emergency Utility Vehicle

A Y Morton & Co have now developed a purpose built twin stretcher rescue vehicle. The rear unit is manufactured as an independent bolt-on pod, incorporating a full roll over protection system and fitted to a Polaris Ranger 6x6 chassis cab. With stretchers removed, the vehicle can be utilised for a multitude of purposes including fire fighting equipment and personnel transportation.



The morton EUV bolt-on pod comes complete with roof storage facility and rear access ladder. The roof can be floored to provide weather protection. The pod has four upper and lower side access panels as well as full opening back door making the EUV pod very accessible from all angles. The EUV pod can be tailor-made to suit individual requirements.

For further information and prices please contact:

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Tel: 01357 522311
Email: alastair@aymorton.co.uk
Website: www.mortoneuv.co.uk



TEAM AND TA MEMBERS, AND STUDENTS FROM THE ROYAL NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND TAKE ON THE BIG BLACK MOUNTAINS

SOUTH WALES

BLIND STUDENTS TAKE ON THE BIG BLACK MOUNTAINS

For the second year running, students at The Royal National College for the Blind (RNCB), Hereford have taken on Big Black Mountains Challenge organised by **Longtown MRT**, with the help of local TA soldiers. Joining over 800 entrants, nine visually impaired students pulled on their walking boots after weeks of training for the charity hike, raising money for both the team and RNCB. The challenge involved walking eighteen miles along the rough terrain of the Black Mountains, taking in two ridges and climbing four summits to a height of 700 metres.

Accompanying the students were members of the H Detachment Royal Mercian Lancastrian Yeoman local Territorial Army and ten college tutors. Student Carl Adamson, who is 37 and from Hereford, said 'I didn't think I'd ever be able to walk mountains again after losing my sight, but with a lot of effort on my part and amazing support from the TA and college staff I've done it and the whole experience was fantastic!'

Colin Spurling, a member of the local TA as well as a member of staff at RNCB said, 'A great day was had by all. Although it was rather windy, it was good walking weather and all the students took the challenge in their stride. The TA and the tutors were there to assist as sighted guides and we were quite overwhelmed by the students' enthusiasm and determination. The concentration and physical ability required to complete the Big Black Mountains Challenge is immense and my hat goes off to each of them.'

Team leader Mark Nicholls continued the sentiment saying, 'The Big Black Mountains Challenge is intended to be exactly that – challenging. Those challenges can include the terrain, the distances, the high mountain environment and the ever changing weather. The team and I were extremely impressed that the RNCB students were able to

take on these challenges, and those of their visual impairments, to successfully complete the 29km route. It clearly demonstrates what people can achieve with determination and the right encouragement and support.'

RNCB team members are still collecting sponsorship and donations, which will be shared between Longtown and the RNCB. Anyone wishing to donate is invited to visit justgiving.com/rncfb

MORE LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Three Longtown team members received awards for twenty-five years service to mountain rescue at the team's AGM. Dave Bevan, Lance Paget and Jo Cadwallader make an impressive trio: Dave, an extremely competent mountaineer who has climbed with some of the best, Lance an experienced and respected search manager and Jo, a slip of a girl but wiry with it. Congratulations and a heartfelt thanks from the team.

STILL IN LONGTOWN...

On a recent weekend exercise, the team spent time familiarising themselves with recently purchased swiftwater rescue equipment, as part of a new area of training for team members. Excellent training was given by Keith Davies, on loan from a



neighbouring team, and a good day was had by all. The equipment will enable the team to safely search for people in and around the rivers, reservoirs and canals within the team's operational area. The dry suits, personal flotation devices (PFD), helmets and throw lines, have been predominantly purchased thanks to a bequest made to the team by the late Helen Charman. The donated funds went a very long way, as the team were able to negotiate purchase of much of the equipment from West Mercia Police. 'We are very grateful to Andrew Milne, Dog Section Inspector of West Mercia Constabulary, for his invaluable support and efforts. And the money went to good use again as it enabled the dog section to purchase another police dog!'

SOUTH WEST

SOMERSET AWARD FOR 'LOCAL HERO'

Duncan Massey of **Avon & Somerset SAR** was presented with the Somerset Local Heroes Award 2011 at a ceremony in Taunton on 2 June in recognition of his services to 'rescue and response' as a First Responder and for his search and rescue role. The 'Local Heroes Award' is organised by BBC Somerset, local newspapers and Somerset County Council. The presentation was made by the deputy chair of SCC, Elaine Weymouth.

OFFICIAL OPENING FOR NEW EXMOOR RESCUE BASE

The sun shone and the crowds gathered for Exmoor SRT at the official opening of their new rescue centre on Mountain Rescue Awareness Day. The team, 250 guests and members of the public looked on as Sir Ranulph Fiennes performed the 'opening' in South Molton, Devon, and helped to make the event a great success.

Team members and supporters had worked hard all morning to clean the centre and the team vehicles, set up equipment displays and information boards and, of course, to prepare the tea and cake stall. When the guests arrived, team members were available to talk about the team's history and capabilities, the personal and team equipment used, first aid training, communications and mapping technology and technical rescue techniques. For younger children there were activity



LEFT: LONGTOWN MEMBERS PRACTISE THEIR SWIFTWATER SKILLS
ABOVE: SIR RANULPH FIENNES SHAKES HANDS WITH EXMOOR CHAIRMAN BILL ALLEN

books to keep them occupied and, for older children, the fake wounds and injuries, applied by team members, proved very popular. There were games and a raffle and Exeter Brewery brought along its beer, called 'Fraid Not', brewed especially to raise money for the southwest's search and rescue teams.

As everyone gathered for the opening ceremony, with impeccable timing, a search and rescue helicopter from RMB Chivenor flew overhead to wish the team well with its celebrations. Sir Ranulph gave an interesting and amusing speech, praising the team's hard work and dedication, and officially opened the rescue centre by unveiling a plaque. Many thanks to all the guests who attended the opening. Thanks must also go to all those individuals and businesses who have donated time, expertise and materials to the rescue centre the fabulous resource that Exmoor can now enjoy. 'It's been a long journey,' say the team, 'but it has most definitely been worth it.'

YORKSHIRE DALES

360 YEARS SERVICE HONOURED

Visitors to the Tempest Arms at Elslack near Skipton, one Friday evening in May, were rather taken aback when the full force of the **Upper Wharfedale FRT** began arriving in the car park. Not their typical rescue call-out, however, but a more relaxed call to attend their annual dinner. This one was a rather special one with their main guest,

Lord Crathorne HM Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire, attending his first dinner as the team's patron, who was due to present some major awards to team members.

Some twelve awards were presented to members whose combined service to mountain rescue totals a staggering 360 years, including three fifty-year stints. Such is their rarity that they had to be specially produced. The recipients were team president Jeremy Daggett and Alan Stockdale, both from Burnsall, and Peter Huff from Grassington. Peter's late father Len was a founder member of the team back in 1948 and it was a very special moment for Peter to receive such an award in front of a team that now consists of some 80 highly trained and dedicated volunteers.

Two Life Membership awards were made to Norman Shorrocks, who has given a remarkable uninterrupted 55 years service and is still involved in call-outs, and Jean Reinsch, who has not only given decades of support in the way of fundraising and other behind-the-scenes work, but also had her husband and three sons in the team.

In his speech Lord Crathorne, who is also a member of the All Party Parliamentary Committee on mountain rescue, paid tribute to all the members for their dedicated and selfless service to saving lives in the Dales. He added that he knew of no other team with so many members with such lengthy service.

RESCWE ALE HONOURS 75 YEARS FOR THE CAVE RESCUE ORGANISATION

Shoppers and pub goers in the Three Peaks area will have seen the quirky eye-catching artwork on the bottles and pump clips of Rescewe Ale over the past year. The ale was specially commissioned by award winning local Dent Brewery to support the 75th anniversary of the Cave Rescue Organisation. For every bottle and cask sold, Dent Brewery kindly made a donation to the team and chairman Jack Pickup collected the cheque for £1000 from Judith Beeley of Dent Brewery on 14 May.

The artwork was specially commissioned for the project and shows a CRO Land Rover on the side of Ingelborough with a black sheep on the roof (hence Rescewe!) and the label actually won second prize in the Commemorative Label Category of The Labologists

Society's 2010 Awards. As part of their 75th anniversary celebrations, the team welcomed the Duke of Kent to their depot in Clapham, North Yorkshire and, on his departure, presented him with two bottles of the beer.

Judith Beeley from Dent Brewery said, 'We felt we should support CRO on the very special occasion of their 75th anniversary because it's a really great cause, close to our hearts. Obviously, we're based in the Dales, we are long time fellwalkers, and know their volunteers do a sterling job in all weathers, 365 days of the year.'

Jack Pickup said, 'I just want to thank Dent Brewery for their generosity but a lot of the credit should go to team member Steve Domoney who put in an incredible amount of work to get the project up and running. Thanks to everyone in the team who went out of their way to promote it into local shops and pubs and, of course, we'd like to thank everyone who has bought the ale.'



ABOVE RIGHT: ROY HOLMES
ABOVE: THE AWARD WINNING RESCEWE LABEL

NEW SCOTTISH TEAM GAINS OFFICIAL RECOGNITION

On Saturday 7 May, Hebrides Search and Rescue, based in the Western Isles, were affiliated to the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, at the AGM at Glenmore Lodge in Aviemore. Team leader Tom Laverty, spoke of the team's delight at the decision to accept their application for membership. 'It's been a tremendous day for the team and I think we're all a little bit relieved the waiting is over and we have had such a positive result from the MRCofS. It's been over three years since we started this work and we've put so much effort into making sure HebSAR met all the requirements.'

Tom also spoke of the support that they received locally. 'Everyone has been so willing to help the team in getting to this stage, especially Chief Inspector Gordon Macleod from Northern Constabulary and Gordon Jamieson the Chief Executive of NHS Western Isles and we're grateful to them for their support.'

Team manager, John Norfolk added, 'Now we are officially recognised, we'll be able to start building the team's capability with more training and raising the funds to ensure the team have the proper equipment to operate safely in the worst of the weather conditions the Western Isles can throw at us.'

'The costs involved in maintaining any search and rescue team are significant as the equipment has to be very sturdy indeed to deal with the conditions. We always rely on the support of both the local community and local businesses and we have had some welcome support from local business, in particular Johannes Engebresten in Stornoway. We hope to be able to continue to work with local businesses in the future.'

Anyone wishing to donate funds towards the team, or just to find out more about them, go to www.hsar.org.uk.



AWARD OF THANKS TO WESTMORLAND

Three Lake District mountain rescue teams presented an 'Award of Thanks' to Westmorland Ltd, in May, in recognition of their long-standing support. The leaders of Penrith, Kirkby Stephen and Kendal teams presented the award to Sarah Dunning, Chief Executive and John and Barbara Dunning, founding directors. The award will be displayed in the southbound and northbound Tebay services on the M6.

Arthur Littlefair, leader of **Kirkby Stephen MRT** commented, 'We are indebted to the generosity of Westmorland and their customers who have been hugely supportive over many years. We are also proud to have John Dunning as our team's president. Westmorland is very active in their local community and we are pleased to recognise this.'



LEFT TO RIGHT: EDDIE HARRISON (KENDAL MRT), SARAH DUNNING, BARBARA DUNNING, IAN CLEMMETT (PENRITH MRT), JOHN DUNNING, ARTHUR LITTLEFAIR (KIRKBY STEPHEN MRT)

Eddie Harrison of **Kendal MRT** added, 'It is indicative of Westmorland's involvement in the community that it has been helping not one, but three, mountain rescue teams. That's why we thought it right we should get together to offer our thanks and recognition for that support.'



'Are you SURE this is what we ordered?..'

Stop Press:

SARDA LAKES NAME CHANGE

In early June, SARDA Lakes changed their name to Lake District Mountain Rescue Search Dogs Association (LDMRSDA).

SARLOC UPDATE

In mid-June, Jim Gallienne, of Cornwall MRT, reported back to Russell Hore, who devised the SARLOC system (detailed in the last issue of the mag): 'I'm pleased to be able to confirm that Cornwall team completed a successful trial of SARLOC today (identifier 19280) using MRMap to view the location. The phone used was a Sony Ericsson Xperia x10 Mini Pro and the results were outstanding.'

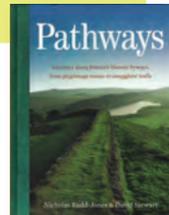
Once the team has fully completed the trials, they plan to send details of their updated ini file to Ross – and perhaps we'll have a more detailed write up here...

STUFF
Book

PATHWAYS

by Nicholas Rudd-Jones & David Stewart

Review by Judy Whiteside



'Map and compass': something of a mantra, amongst our hillgoing, walking, mountain rescue fraternity. Well forget the compass for a mo, (metaphorically you understand, heaven forbid not REALLY) and consider the map. More particularly, the myriad dotted green lines which lead us on our way, rarely daring to stray from their comforting safety into the wilds beyond. We might get lost. Not, it would seem, a fear which has ever beset David Stewart and Nicholas Rudd-Jones, self-confessed footpath fanatics. Not content with idly following those tiny green dashes, they spend hours, on arrival at a new place, poring over their OS map, 'scouring it for signs of a Roman road, an old tramway or a packhorse route over the hills.'

Pathways, they reckon, made our nation (I sense a rousing orchestra striking up...), forming a map of every relationship, be it social, familial or commercial. Pathways between friends and loved ones, between work and home, tracks from quarry to coast, trods cut to control monastic orders as they spread across Europe, tribal boundaries and roads to move armies. Nowadays we see carefully engineered pathways around country estates, or stone-slabbed across the wilder bits lest we lose our way, tracks across moorland for the hunting of deer, and the more recent invention – the 'sculpture trail'. And the essence of all these can still be captured, they believe, simply by walking them. Feel the thousands of feet, and hooves, that have trodden the path before you.

And, it has to be said, they've worn through a fair bit of boot leather exploring these pathways for your enjoyment. At 320 pages, there's plenty of exploring you can do before even lacing up your own boots. In Pathways, the authors have brought you twenty variants of the 'walk': ridgeways, processions and Roman roads, through forest tracks, and the catchily titled 'corpse road' (the clue is in the name), to seaside promenades and pedestrian precincts. The corpse roads, incidentally, were often deliberately routed through the worst bogs by landowners anxious not to halt the progress of pallbearers to churches in neighbouring valleys but equally unwilling to make them too easy to walk by the general public, lest they became established rights of way.

Each chapter focuses on one type of pathway, looking at the history behind its development before detailing a suggested route – with easy-to-follow map and some stunning photography – with points of interest and a bit of background into why they chose it. Which provides some interesting reading. It seems, for example, that whilst deliberating which section of Offa's Dyke to walk, Stewart found himself summonsed to Shrewsbury Crown Court as a prosecution witness. His memory of the incident, however, involving two young men racing on the motorway, had faded after more than a year. Asked whether he recalled seeing a silver Ford Fiesta, and realising he didn't, he ventured it could have been one of the cars in front, hidden behind a cloud of burning rubber. 'Please don't speculate, Mr Stewart,' chided the judge. 'Just stick to what you saw.'

I digress, I know, but my point is that this 'coffee table book' is packed with interesting snippets and a wealth of information, all of which is very clearly researched and crafted by two individuals who hold pathways very close to their hearts. It can't fail to inspire you to get up and share some of their adventures.

And if you're wondering about the logistics of carting a weighty hardback around on your travels, fear not, as all the walks will also be downloadable from Walking World at www.walkingworld.com, for which a subscription is payable. I can't help thinking also that, given the miles and miles of pathways they haven't yet documented in this form, there must be many, more books in them yet... best clear a shelf.

'Pathways' by Nicholas Rudd-Jones and David Stewart. Published by Guardian Books. www.guardianbooks.co.uk. ISBN: 978-0-85265-226-8. 253x195mm. 320 pages. Price £20.

SCOTLAND

by Chris Townsend

Review by Mike Margeson



I quite often find that 'best of' compilation-type guide books just don't make the grade. Chris Townsend's describes his new Scottish guide as 'a resource for hillwalker, ski tourer and mountaineer.' Well, I thought I would put the guide to the test and took it with me on a recent trip to Torridon.

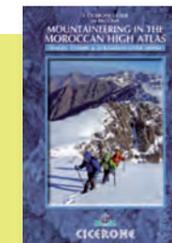
There was I guess, a bench mark to measure against, the trusty SMC regional guides. Each section of Chris Townsend's guide – there are eight areas including one on the Islands – is illustrated with stunning photographic images. There are also high quality map extracts to compliment the introduction to each area. It is quite clear that Chris has amassed all the essential information required. I particularly like the way the guide uses a simple system of symbols to indicate scrambles, rock climbs or low or high level walks or even ski tours. There is also an extensive introduction covering a wide range of useful topics such as access, the environment, topography and geology and the history and culture. There is also a glossary with Munro and Corbett tables and translations of the Gaelic mountain names. This is indeed a very useful and well researched resource and, if travelling, a handy single guide to carry. I am pleased to report that it bucks the trend and really does make the grade!

'Scotland. A comprehensive coverage of each mountain area description and advice for walking, mountaineering, climbing and ski touring' by Chris Townsend. Published by Cicerone. www.cicerone.co.uk. ISBN: 978-1-85284-442-4. 234 x 156mm. 560 pages. Price £25.00.

MOUNTAINEERING IN THE MOROCCAN HIGH ATLAS Walks and Scrambles over 3000M

by DES CLARK

Review by Steve Stout



I think this is the first dedicated winter guidebook to the Atlas that I've seen in English. There is so much to do in this area – it's like a bigger version of Scotland, to my mind, and practically untouched, with regular visits for the ski touring by our European cousins and, of course, the ascent of Toubkal by trekkers from everywhere!

The book itself contains info about three distinct parts of the range, which is divided by the two road cols of Tizi n-Test and Tizi n-Tichka, roughly running from west (Lowest) to east (Mgoun), with a focus on the Toubkal and Mgoun regions, as these are the most popular and amenable areas, especially for a first time visit. There's a breakdown of the mountain areas, some useful mountain topos and plenty of information, however getting your head around the complex Berber names will lead to confusion and you'll maybe find you need to either have a map handy or actually be there for them to start to make sense – especially as a lot of the names are different on the maps, or not there at all!

The grading follows the alpine system of F, PD, AD, D etc. There are no 'harder' climbs, (TD and above) listed due, I suspect, to there not being too many as yet! There is also a scale for remoteness which the author has created. All in all it's a credible book giving relevant information, but more importantly it will open the door for people who need a guidebook before they head out there, then things will begin to develop at a faster pace in this beautiful corner of the world.

'Mountaineering in the Moroccan High Atlas' by Des Clark. Published by Cicerone. ISBN: 978-1-85284-611-4. 172x116mm. 192 pages. Price £15.00.

THE COAST TO COAST WALK

by Martin Wainwright

Review by Judy Whiteside



Gap to fill, so why not a review of this cracking little guidebook? And, from chats with fellow Coast to Coasters along the way, I'd say it's generally acknowledged as the best, some of the others on the market leaving substantial gaps in the telling.

Martin Wainwright (no relation to the route's author) has put together a handy comprehensive guide which, when opened out flat fits neatly in with the map in the Ortlieb. His route descriptions are dotted with personal opinion and observations (not always in accord with my own, but always entertaining), with a fair bit of history and 'points of interest' stuff thrown in. He offers route choices in some sections, depending on your preference for heights, prevailing weather conditions and the time of year, and the whole route is well illustrated with 'snapshots' of the OS map you're following at any point in time, at 1:25 000. Of course, sometimes you need to look at the 'big' map for context and to get your bearings but the two work well together. I also took some time, before setting off on my trip, to transcribe each day's route description into a separate Word file – much handier than keep turning the book's pages and ploughing through often lengthy asides. In short, if you're planning to do the walk, add this to the 'must-buy' list!

'The Coast to Coast Walk' by Martin Wainwright. Published by Aurum. www.aurupress.co.uk. ISBN: 978-1-8513-560-7. 210x130mm. 192 pages. Price £12.99.

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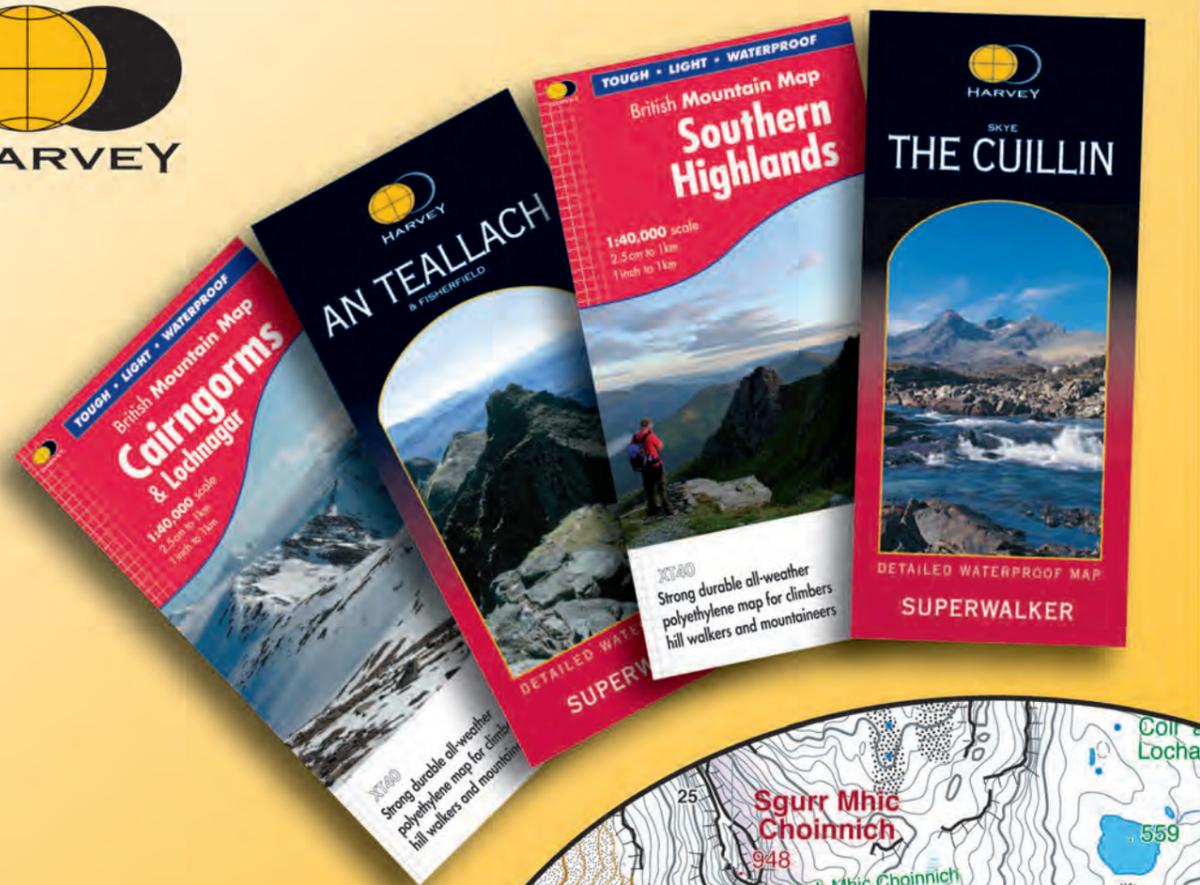
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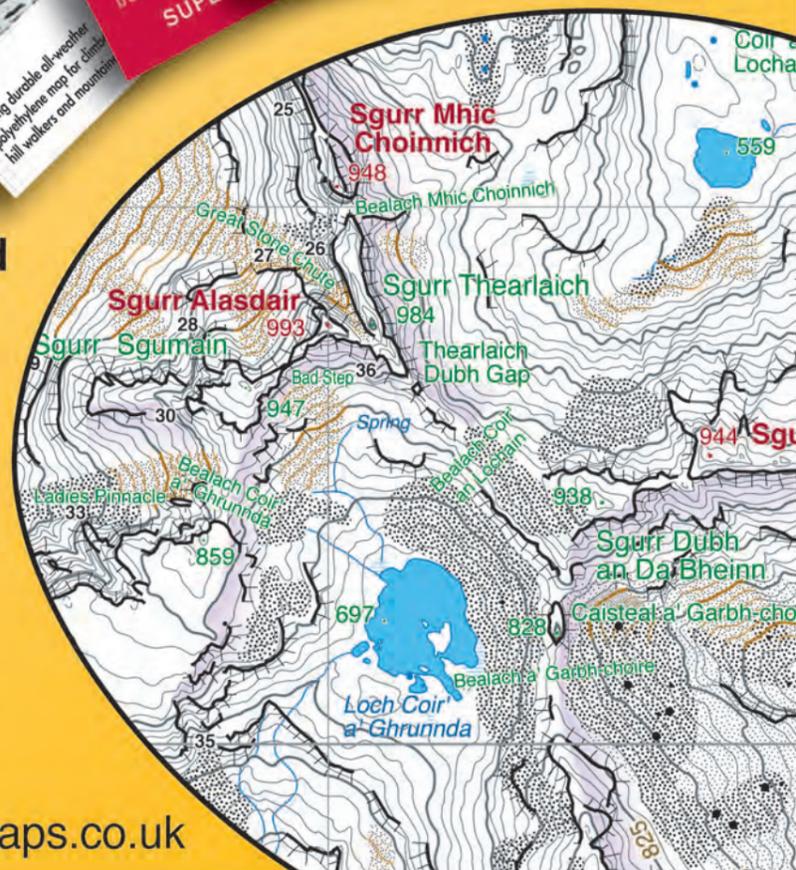
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A BIT OF HISTORY... BOWLAND PENNINE MRT PHIL LUND GOES BACK TO THE BEGINNING



The Northern Rescue Organisation and South Ribble Mountain Rescue Team were both formed in 1962 after the sad loss of two brothers on the fells north of Chipping. In 1980, the teams based in Preston amalgamated to form Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team.

Last October, I was asked if NRO had a chronicler because a briefing sheet, on the history of the team, was being developed for new members. No such chronicler existed so I decided, a few days later, to have a go. So began six months of research into the Northern Rescue Organisation.

On 31 March, at BPMRT's HQ at Ray Lane in Garstang, I presented NRO 1962-80 to a group of 28 ex-NRO founder and former members plus invited guests. After the presentation

high points from the presentation: The Lancashire Mountain Accident Panel was formed late 1965 with aims to unite local teams, raise awareness, standardise equipment and organise exercises. First secretary was Cliff Price, an NRO member. This forum developed over the years and is now the Mid Pennine Search and Rescue Organisation.

An article in the medical journal 'Sphincter' detailed a call-out on Ingleborough 21 May 1967 and there were seven call-outs in total for 1967.



and over a buffet, members exchanged phone numbers – some had lost contact years before – and then viewed the team's new Land Rover and control vehicle which differs a little from the Morris LD Van of the mid '60s.

The information gathered amounted to over 450 pictures, sixteen articles from the Lancs Evening Post 1962-70, early newsletters called 'Northern News' from '64-65, various minutes of council, committee and AGMs, various publications and personal written statements from members on their experiences. These are some

In its life of eighteen years, the NRO had eight different HQs around Preston, starting off in property owned by its founder Ross Drysdale in Chapel Yard, now a car park. Then, via garages in Union St and Higher Bank Road, to Kimberley Barracks where I joined. Onto more garages, one the back of a private house before moving to a large building in the grounds of Deepdale Isolation Hospital! Finally to Westleigh where we joined up with South Ribble.

All manner of vehicles were used by the NRO starting off with 4x4 ex-military trucks a Humber and an



Snippets from the 'Northern News'...

May 1964:

- ★ Subs 2s 6d and 5s (£1.90 and £3.80 at 2010 values)
- ★ NRO will provide expenses and refreshments on call-out
- ★ New Pye Telecommunications radios due
- ★ Digging at Whitewell Pot has found 20ft pitch

July 1964

- ★ Thomas Stretcher just arrived
- ★ 'Wireless section' – new radios being prepared
- ★ Mock ex held at White Coppice, good inquest (debrief) held the following Monday
- ★ Still accepting new members but will be a little more choosy in future!!
- ★ Recent discussion with County Police agreed they would call out rescue teams

Feb 1965

- ★ First team to operate on MR frequency 86.325 KHz
- ★ Young ladies required for typing!!!!



Austin K9 painted yellow, so you would certainly see it coming! Morris LD control van with the beacon lights operated manually with someone switching them on/off/on/off.

The team purchased an ex-Manchester ambulance for just £15 (£210) with the sole purpose of providing intensive care at the road head for casualties. Bob Grieve, doctor and team leader, pushed for this capability. He also rerouted the heater outlet into an adapted cas bag to aid rewarming. When this vehicle finally ended its days in the scrap yard the silver bell was kept and mounted onto subsequent vehicles, and was presented to me on 31 March. We will be installing it at Ray Lane and will use it to call members together to start meetings! Various Land Rovers followed before a fantastic donation from the Harold Bridges Foundation of £10,000 (£54,000) in 1976. Two brand new LWB Rovers were purchased.

Bob Grieve ran an experiment with six team members as guinea pigs to investigate the benefit of poly bags in combating hypothermia. Three were dry and three soaked wet through then monitored over time until it was end of experiment and into a hot bath! (More on this next issue. Ed.)

Bob also ran an Experiment Course in Mountain Rescue First Aid Oct 69-Mar 70, cost 25/- (£15) sadly Bob died in May 1970 at a very young age. Had he lived I'm sure he would have become a leading figure in outdoor medicine. Paul Hughes stepped up to the mark and became TL and the team pushed on. Paul is the longest serving member of NRO and was also the first chairman of BPMRT.

NRO and BPMRT had a long association with the Fellsman Hike, a

60mile 11,000ft two-day continuous hike around the Yorkshire Dales. Usually the third weekend in May, NRO's first Fellsman was in 1965. We ran safety cover and hill top checkpoints, assisted by Bolton MRT, and it certainly stretched the team logistically and mentally.

The Annual Dinner Dance was the social highlight of the team year and a good fundraising opportunity. Funds were also supplemented by subs, donations from fell race cover and a sponsored event each year. On one occasion, the team took money on loan from the membership, in £25 lots, to buy a Land Rover.

Following the evening presentation, I received this letter from one of the ex-members:

On behalf of David Seed and myself, I would like to thank you, and the whole team, for making us so welcome last night and for putting on a programme of information and instruction which we both thoroughly enjoyed.

At the end of the evening we came away enthralled by the professionalism, expertise and friendliness of the team members to the 'winklies' from an earlier era who attended the event.

To say the least, it was impressive the progress the team has made since our time and we will certainly keep an eye on your activities in the future.

I joined NRO in 1972 and enjoyed great camaraderie and humour, certainly many aspects of MR have moved on greatly compared to today. However, we all know where mighty oak trees come from – little acorns. So BPMRT and I salute the Northern Rescue Organisation for their pioneering work for MR in Lancashire.

Milly in trouble... first with the helicopter...

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

Milly Morning



Thump... thump... thump... the noise grew louder and louder 'til I couldn't bear it anymore.... a pungent, acrid smell of aviation fuel filled my nostrils... a terrifying down draft of air was sucking the life out of me... just out of the corner of my eye a massive yellow object descended from the sky.

Vaguely I could hear Special Human running behind me, her voice loud and desperate, lost in the noise, smell and maelstrom of air movement.

She found me cowering and shaking uncontrollably in the doorway of a building, on her face a look of mixed stress and sympathy. Gently she picked me up, held me in her arms and carried me across to the safe haven of my kennel in the back of the car. I'd really like to trust her; I should know that she would never let me come to any harm. But when natural survival instincts take over, any sort of doggie sense just goes out of the window.

I'm five years old now; you would have thought I would have got used to helicopters. I've even been taken to see a dog psychologist, (who incidentally even asked questions about my bowel movements!) in order to 'de-sensitise' myself to the horrendous yellow beast. But to no avail. A helicopter only has to appear on the horizon and I'm quaking in my paws. The 'doggie psycho' gave Special Human a CD of helicopter noises, the idea was to de-sensitise me to the noise and make it seem normal.

NORMAL??!! There's nothing normal about

a huge noisy, smelly, yellow beast descending from the sky. I ask myself... NORMAL I'd rather run over a cornice, which incidentally I tried one day on Glas Maol. What a ride that was!!! Special Human was traumatised.

You would think that if I was so scared of something, Special Human would be good enough to keep me away from them. But oh no.... as often as not I'm trussed up in my full body harness (I've included a picture for you here – how undignified is that????) held real tight and woman-handled onto the helicopter. My last helicopter epic was on Ben Nevis, just check out my look of disgust! Tell you what, I'd much rather jump than stay inside....

...and then with the snowboard...

I've been around skiers and snowboarders all of my life. Special Human worked in the ski area so it seemed pretty normal for me to see Humans whizzing down the hill when the snow arrived. A close shave early on as a young pup, was pivotal in my education and self preservation around skis. Special Human's best buddy Fran, tried to mow me down on the south side of Cairngorm; luckily I slipped between her legs at the last minute and avoided a disaster. Since then I've learnt to be very respectful of those pointy, sharp things and kept well out of the way... until...

Dark red blood seeped from my leg and across the snow as the searing pain registered. The snow boarder had run over my back leg. The cut was clean and sharp like a knife where the metal edge of the board had sliced through flesh, tendons and an artery... Blood pumped from the artery as I thrashed in panic and pain. Special Human wrapped a bandage around my leg, but it didn't stem the flow. Ruari rushed us down the hill on the back of a skidoo blood pouring over me, over Special Human and all over the seat of the shiny new skidoo. I didn't understand, I struggled and writhed as Ruari tried to calm me down and strap on extra bandages. 'Pressure and elevation' I heard a panicked Human cry – what were they going to do? Turn me upside down?

An eventful drive ensued; me pouring blood in the rear of the car, Special Human driving in ski boots, 25 miles to the nearest vets, stressed. If that wasn't bad enough as I was lifted from the car and carried into the vets, Special Human slipped on the smooth floor in her ski boots and we both went flying in a pool of blood. Not the most dignified of entrances I would say!

The vets (bless them) saved the day and more importantly my life. A drip, internal and external stitches and three months recovery saw me bouncing back to relative normality. Oh and did I tell you about that dreaded 'lampshade'? You can see it in the photo here – sorry state I look eh? They MADE ME wear it for SIX weeks! It seemed like a good idea to lick and chew at my wound every time they took it off, cos' that's what us dogs do. Special Human didn't quite see it that way. One day I jumped in the loch with the 'lampshade' on, it caused a bit of a stir... but that's another story.



TOP: SLEEPING IT OFF ABOVE: THE DREADED LAMPSHADE! I ASK YOU... IS THIS A LOOK YOU'D LOVE? FOR SIX WEEKS?! PHOTOS: HEATHER MORNING



TOP: LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE! ABOVE: PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME GO... A MAD PANIC PHOTOS: KATHY GRINDROD

OBITUARY

David Watt

Over one hundred members of mountain rescue, including thirty SARDA dogs and their handlers, from all parts of the British Isles gathered in Kirkby Stephen at the funeral of David Watt in celebration of his life. Drawn together in tribute, following his untimely passing whilst landing his light aircraft on his home landing strip near Kirkby Stephen, they lined the sides of the church path in his honour... a ribbon of red jackets.

David Watt was 63 and had many other professional interests besides search and rescue, putting them to practical community use. His wife Anette has kindly consented to us including a few words here and a photo of David with his beloved dogs Flash and Dynamite. She and the family have said 'a big thank you to everybody for their support'. They think David 'would have enjoyed the send off.'

Mick Guy (Lake District Mountain Search Dogs) and Arthur Littlefair (Team Leader, Kirkby Stephen MRT) pay tribute.

Mountain rescue personnel all over the Lake District were stunned to hear that search dog handler David Watt, from Kirby Stephen, had been killed in a plane crash at his home near Kirkby on 5 May.

A greatly valued member of the Kirkby Stephen team for over 30 years, mountain rescue was a major part of David's life – and it was a role to which he brought dedication, commitment and enthusiasm. His greatest, most intense passion, though, was the use of search dogs. It takes many years of dedication to train a dog to the standard expected of them and David would be the first to acknowledge the unstinting support of his wife, Anette, and the forbearance of his family in all his endeavours. David 'Watty' Watt had been a graded dog

handler with SARDA Lakes (now Lake District Mountain Search Dogs), for a continuous period of twenty years, and there aren't many handlers who can make such a claim. He worked much of the Pennine area on a regular basis, but was equally willing to make the long journey to the central fells of the Lake District, to support rescue teams there. His fellow team members came to admire his stubborn determination and willingness to turn out in the most unpleasant weather at any time to requests for assistance to search for say an elderly person missing from home... perhaps an overdue walker... or a despondent needing to be located quickly. It was a mark of the man that, if he could go, he would. He'd not say no.

His first dog, Jack, had a very long career, eventually dying at the age of eighteen. A combative character with other dogs, Jack was delightful with humans, and made two finds.

Dynamite, David's second dog, who was trained as Jack grew close to retirement, worked till the age of thirteen. She will be remembered for the fact that, during her early training, the only things that would make her bark were a handbrush or a Hoover pipe! Anette would be sent off on the fell behind their house to body, suitably equipped with both these items. Dynamite made a find at Ambleside towards the end of her career, but had been a regular attender on call-outs in all Lakes areas.

Flash, his last dog, graded in 2006 and attended a variety of call-outs, making two finds in her own patch around Kirkby Stephen. As a dog handler and assessor, David was always willing to assist others in their training, discuss new approaches and question established routines. He found all aspects of training fascinating, and dedicated a lot of time to investigating them, also assisting with training and assessment on courses across the UK and further afield in Iceland, America and Norway.

David Allan, MREW chairman, noted his 'significant contribution' to mountain rescue, in particular that his 'enthusiasm and novel ideas enlivened the national medical subcommittee. With such ideas we were at times entertained... sometimes frustrated. He challenged us... he made us think.'



David as a person was complex, witty, perceptive, challenging – all of these things and more. He was a man of huge enthusiasm for life, and all that it encompassed, and hence was always good company. He was trained as a dentist, and outside of his normal practice, undertook voluntary dental work in Africa and Nepal. When he retired, following an accident to his hand on a call-out, he took up forensic dentistry, and travelled widely to research and practise. He was also an accomplished singer, and sang with a local choir. He was a man of real character and people liked him for his engaging personality and enjoyed his self-deprecating dry wit.

When asked, as he would be, how's your dog doing David? He would, as like as not, reply 'the dog's doing fine – shame about its handler.'

He was an enthusiastic pilot and had many flying hours to his credit. In fact, he was piloting an aircraft he had built himself from kit form when he died. This was the second he had built, and he was in the process of building a third. Typically he was also a member of Skywatch Civil Air Patrol, a group of amateur pilots who use their aircraft to offer air search facilities if emergency services require them.

That he should have gone while engaged in an activity he so enjoyed provides perhaps some small comfort. The volume of tributes from mountain rescue team members from all over the Lakes and beyond is testament to the esteem in which he was held.

It goes without saying that the whole community associated with Lake District mountain rescue has been devastated by David's untimely death, and our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Anette, and children Andrew and Alison. He will be sorely missed.

ELLY AND JOY MAKE THE GRADE

Two female mountain rescue team members have passed the rigorous assessments required in the Lakes to become graded dog handlers. Both Elly Whiteford (Keswick MRT) and Joy Grindrod (Coniston MRT) have had graded dogs before so know that getting through the assessment process is just the beginning of life on the call-out list. Call-outs are, more often than not, late at night or early in the morning, and in poor weather – when really you'd really prefer to be in bed. New search dogs Meg (Elly) and Einich (Joy) are both tri-colour border collie bitches and well suited to the mountainous terrain of the Lakes. Both have trained for over two years in a variety of locations throughout the Lakes and Scotland. The assessments were on home ground with the last of these in the Howgills – with its wide open spaces, steep hillsides and deep gullies, it's a great place for assessing a dog's ranging ability, testing the handler's ability to push their dog and direct them into more inaccessible areas.



JOY GRINDROD (LEFT) WITH EINICH AND ELLY WHITEFORD (RIGHT) WITH MEG

Outdoor skills and search and rescue: Stand alone skills or techniques to complement traditional search practice?



David Housley

Midshires Search and Rescue (MSAR) recently undertook training in various outdoor skills, courtesy of Woodland Ways. The training posed questions on what outdoor skills, in addition to basic search techniques, may be of use; how often they would be of use and how do we best use them to support a search.

Tracking is clearly a very powerful tool that all searchers would benefit from having an insight into. As discussed below, I think a knowledge of tracking makes you a better searcher. It makes you see things differently; seeing the same things as others but understanding the greater meaning of them. However, since the UK has relatively limited experience of incorporating tracking into misper searches, how do we implement this new skill – progressively, selectively, or a 'big hit' approach?

Tracking per se is relatively easy to learn, and many of the basic principles are compatible with what we learn on basic searcher courses. However, to become a competent tracker who is safe to deploy on a live search requires commitment from both the individual and their team to support and undertake training.

There are several aspects of tracking that can be readily incorporated into current search practice and used as a basis upon which to evolve and develop this skill.

Core knowledge of a searcher or team leader includes recognising and protecting a crime scene. We are however, probably less robust at recognising and protecting track sign. The key problem is probably failure to recognise. Tracking training does undoubtedly change and improve the way a searcher views the environment in which they are searching. Most searchers would inherently be attempting to spot easy to recognise signs of a person's presence such as items



TRACKING TRAINING OUTDOORS: UNDERSTANDING HOW TO SPOT AND UNDERSTAND SIGNS IN A REAL ENVIRONMENT

of clothing, cigarette butts, tablet packets etc. However, a searcher might not identify harder to spot signs such as trampled vegetation, broken twigs and turned over stones.

This emphasis on sign awareness helps change a searcher's perception from 'we are looking for a misper' to 'we are looking for a misper or physical evidence or indicators that they have been present'. Consequently, although tracking per se would require significant practice, the insight into sign recognition is well worthwhile.

Two further frequent occurrences that occur during foot searches can also be approached in an improved manner in light of the better

understanding tracking yields. The first relates to the finding of things of potential significance, such as items of clothing. On live searches, many of these are incidental finds and one useful approach to allow them to be discounted is 'aging'. Many searchers probably already do this subconsciously, but a formal understanding of how tracks/sign age has great potential to improve a searcher's ability to rapidly assess an item and the surrounding area, allowing a find to be reliably excluded from, or included as information to control, enabling a search to progress with greater speed and focus.

The second problem is, having identified an area of vegetation

that has been passed through, can we identify if the track was made by a human or animal, and how long ago? For example, it's not uncommon, undertaking a route and path search, to find an apparent track heading away from the main route into deeper undergrowth. Searchers being unnecessarily distracted by apparent tracks that are in reality animal tracks has the potential to delay searching. The ability to rapidly distinguish human from animal tracks and to date tracks has the potential to significantly reduce wasted time. Obviously, the ultimate goal of a misper search is to locate the person, and tracking can be applied directly to this. Additionally, tracking may not directly lead a

team to the misper, but allows controllers and team leaders to narrow down the search area in order to reduce the length of time a successful search takes.

Another interesting feature of tracking is the concept of 'zoning in': on arrival, taking time to relax and become familiar with the immediately local environment. This has obvious advantages such as allowing a more relaxed searcher to find it easier to spot sign and the ability to notice changes in local wildlife (animal distress calls, or birds flocking) that may indicate a misper being in the area. However, this directly conflicts with the concept of search being urgent and the role of a hasty search. This will be something for teams who use trackers to rationalise. Also, if teams are split into trackers who take time to zone in, and searchers who deploy to undertake a hasty search, consideration of how the searchers avoid destroying track or disturbing wildlife is essential.

Another potential area of conflict with traditional search techniques revolves around team composition. There could be dedicated tracking teams, or another option for units would be to have a search team containing a single tracker who swaps between functioning as a traditional foot searcher and a tracker to advise his/her team leader.

However, can a 'zoned in' tracker really swap between roles whilst maintaining their focus and track awareness? Again this is heavily dependent on what a team wants from its trackers – pure tracker, or searcher applying certain principles of tracking at opportune moments. Equally however, some aspects of tracking directly support and enhance traditional search techniques. The tracking concepts of looking for both aerial sign (broken twigs, fibres caught on vegetation, fences etc turned over or bent vegetation, broken cobwebs) and ground sign (footprints, discarded items, body waste, blood spots) directly complements the concept of the searcher's cube and almost certainly enhances how we perform it. It is also a useful coincidence that the ideal tracking team, comprising three persons, is not dissimilar to a traditional search team.

Sign-cutting, especially using natural points of passage such as

gateways to rapidly assess if a person has passed by recently, could potentially speed up the search of an area but teams using this invaluable tactic will need an internal plan for how they ensure an area is searched as completely as the POLSA and controller envisage.

Perhaps sub-sectors could be created with different probabilities of detection being governed by the presence or absence of sign. This issue will be heavily influenced by the team leaders, controllers and POLSA's confidence in the skill levels of the tracker. As and when tracking becomes more common, the problem of ensuring that UK police forces have sufficient confidence in this new skill is something that will need to be addressed.

Tracking in the purest form also highlights the information we should attempt to gather from the police or relatives prior to a search commencing, and the relevance and priority that we place upon it. The following list will be variably familiar to a traditionally trained searcher: age, sex, height, weight, build, hair colour and length, clothing, equipment, footwear, outdoor experience, state of health, past injuries, personality traits, state of mind, hobbies and interests, right or left handed, weather conditions. These details vary by how overtly useful they are and how easy they are to obtain, but it does emphasise that any team wishing to adopt tracking needs to consider the implications for all aspects from pre-search planning and information gathering, through control and sectoring to team operations. Conversely, we need to consider how information readily available to us or taken for granted in a traditional search scenario can be utilised by trained trackers. For example, how many controllers having assessed tables of missing person behaviour would automatically consider that information on the psychology of missing persons is of potential benefit to a tracker. This may include information such as panic syndrome; will they move up or down hill; will they be attracted to water; how will the child's age influence their behaviour; how will fear influence their tracks? Likewise, the tracker can inform controllers on the way a misper is behaving because of recognised action indicators such as change

in stride length or irregular strides indicating things such as change of speed or injury.

In addition to theory and practice of tracking, we had an introduction to natural navigation. Again, selective use of these skills has potential to aid our basic search techniques. It is possible to set off on a search within a sector, only to find ourselves deviating off track or to find ourselves temporarily 'lost' in our sector. We were shown how the subtleties of our environment could help us stay on track without distracting us from searching by the need to check compasses etc.

The first obvious use is, prior to commencing a search, particular attention is paid to the location of the sun, or a significant local feature such as road that can be clearly heard throughout the search area. By consciously making reference to that feature throughout the search, the aim would be to maintain linearity of search, or to maintain overall orientation in the search sector. Use of the sun in this manner has certainly been used by Midshires on a search in an area of difficult woodland comprising thick undergrowth, disparate placing of holly trees that required frequent wandering and numerous patches and borders of rhododendron. It was surprising how effective reference to the sun was in terms of maintaining the search line, and rationalising the discussion within the team when we became 'lost' within our sector and needed to re-establish our position and orientation within the wood.

Likewise, reference to a road facilitated localising ourselves at a cross-section of paths that were not marked on the OS map. Accurate and detailed reading of the mapping prior to deploying into a search sector can additionally have its advantages such as alerting the searcher to changes in landscape or terrain, or key features such as pylons or power lines that would be expected to appear if the search is on track. These principles are not confined to rural environments. For example if searching in a town, or if residential dwellings are visible on the edge of an urban search area, satellite dishes will indicate the southerly direction. Whilst some of this practice may subconsciously happen in a team, formal understanding of the

concept is invaluable and helps to engrain it within the psyche of the searcher.

Other aspects of natural navigation are more subtle, and



TRACKING TRAINING IN THE CLASSROOM: USE OF A SAND PIT TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLES OF FOOTPRINT SIGN AND ACTION INDICATORS

have a less obvious direct influence on search strategy, but again knowledge helps to focus the searchers thinking and visual perception on their locality. For example, being aware of how moss grows on trees; how felled trees show non-centric growth or how tree growth is affected by prevailing winds. Additionally, natural navigation knowledge may aid in search or equipment planning, as awareness of significant and sudden changes in wind direction may indicate the potential for imminent changes in weather.

I personally would strongly advocate that teams explore the potential uses of tracking and associated outdoor skills. Midshires was lucky in that our trainers allowed and encouraged us to explore what aspects of these skills are useful to search and how to selectively apply and utilise them. The training also encouraged us to understand that tracking training is not a single weekend activity but requires continued commitment by the individual and their team and made us consider the implications of tracking on the whole service that we deliver.

Individuals or teams who undertake this training would be strongly advised to consider their requirements in advance and seek to be trained by trackers experienced in, or aware of the specific requirements and limitations of UK SAR.

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



Adventure Eyes HELPING YOU TO PROMOTE Your Fundraising Efforts

The eagle-eyed amongst you may have spotted the 'Adventure Eyes' name cropping up recently in all manner of emails, blog posts and news stories relating to mountain rescue – and particularly mountain rescue fundraising efforts. From coast to coast adventures to Everest expeditions, from witches on Pendle to youngsters braving Dartmoor – and a whole host more – wherever there's a fundraising effort they can support, the girls have been there, helping to plug it!

The Adventure Eyes team is driven by Louise Ansell and Kate Ryley. A Mountaineering Instructor, Louise has been working and playing in the world of outdoor adventure for eighteen years as instructor, coach, lecturer and writer, in various locations throughout the UK and Europe. Kate also counts a string of outdoor qualifications and activities to her credit and reckons 'in it, on it, around it, taking pictures of it – anything outdoorsy' is good with her. Adventure Eyes, says Kate, is their

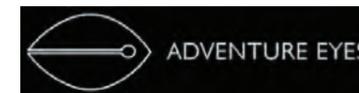
vehicle to inspire others to go and do, whilst doing themselves. As dyed-in-the-wool outdoor types themselves, their aim is to provide a source of quality, respected, useful information about adventures in the UK and beyond whilst also, they hope, igniting passion and enthusiasm in people to explore and experience adventures.

Through their website, blogs, Facebook and Twitter feeds they can help get your fundraising messages out there, publicising your events and updating on your progress during whatever challenge you've set yourself, ensuring maximum opportunities for the cash to come flooding in. Or that's the plan! Adventure Eyes information and publications are freely accessible. However, there is a donation link from both the Adventure Search page and the Blog page on their website. The downloadable Adventure Information packs will also be accompanied by an



LOUISE ANSELL AND KATE RYLEY

option to donate. And, whilst they also support fundraising activities for the RNLI they've decided that, as mountain rescue receives considerably less fundraising attention, donations from Adventure Eyes will go directly to Mountain Rescue England and Wales. So, if you have anything you need a bit of promotional activity with – not to mention a large dose of cheering on – drop them a line at info@adventure-eyes.com or call 07792 370344 and get inspired! adventure-eyes.com



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Andrew Armstrong is a serving soldier who has just returned from Afghanistan. Not one to shirk a challenge, he plans to walk the Pennine Way next year, fully loaded with kit and to complete it in ten days, in aid of Mountain Rescue England and Wales and Help for Heroes at the same time. The 28 year-old has been in the Army for about twelve having joined at the age of sixteen. He's off for his second stint in Afghanistan in October, so hopes to fit his vital 'challenge training' in, in between the demands of his service life. 'I wanted something that would challenge me. The lads that come back

missing limbs and the other injuries have to go through harder challenges than this, and this is my way of showing somehow what they have to go through.

'I'm also supporting Mountain Rescue because the Army is quite big on adventure training and a lot of the forces enjoy hill walking and trekking. We do a lot of it for adventure training and it's always good to know, if anything happens to us, your teams are always there to help us.

'There have been times I've been out and seen the work the teams do. So I thought it'd be good to try to raise money and awareness at the same time. What better way to do it than a challenge like this?'

I've had some help in the planning stage. Firstly my mate Scott, who has helped with the routes and the emails. He's been a big help making it happen. As for company sponsorship - the only one to offer any help is RVops.co.uk. They're all

ex-military and have a shop in Plymouth. They are supplying some of the kit I need for the trip.

'However, I still have a long way to go before I'm ready. There's a lot of stuff I require so, if there's any of your readers who can help, that would be brilliant.'

Alex is still looking for maps - the main one for planning. 1,2500 would be ideal. Also, any equipment, new or old, you think would be useful.

The father of two is funding much of this himself. One of his suggestions is that any equipment he doesn't use could be raffled off after the event, to pull in even more cash for the charities. If the equipment came from Mountain Rescue readers, then the funds raised for those items will go only to Mountain Rescue.

If there are any companies out there who would be willing to help out, then they will, of course, benefit from any publicity.

John O'Groats to Land's End CYCLING THE LENGTH OF THE UK for Scarborough & Ryedale and Grace

On the 25 July, Scarborough team member Roger Hartley and friend Colin Stonehouse will set off on an epic bike ride, from John O'Groats to Land's End in aid of two very worthy causes. The team needs no explanation, but what about Grace? Born with quadriplegic cerebral palsy, this brave little seven-year-old, who is Colin's niece, requires specialist medical treatment. She has been visiting a clinic in Poland to help her condition but, with a month's treatment costing £8000 and no government funding available, much help is needed to allow her twice-yearly treatment to continue.

Mr Stonehouse said, 'She's seven but has the body of an eight-month old baby. She has all this physio and once a day she wears a special suit that allows her to walk normally. Developed for Russian cosmonauts, it's made of pieces of elastic which align her bones and muscles so they are all in the right position to walk properly. She's come on so much but needs to keep going.'

The John O'Groats to Land's End bike ride is approximately 900 miles long and takes twelve days. To find out more or to sponsor the pair go to justgiving.com/Roge-Hartley



PHOTOS THANKS TO AUDI UK

Mountain Rescue at AUDI POLO CHALLENGE in Chester

Wednesday 1 June saw National Fundraising Chairman Mike France and Editor Judy Whiteside as guests at the Audi Polo Challenge. This year's event was the furthest north ever for Audi - based as it was at Chester Racecourse - a point not lost on one of the guests, a certain Liverpoolian, John Bishop, in his very entertaining 'thank you' on behalf of all the guests. Stand-up at its best.

The event featured the newly-wed Duke of Cambridge and his team Umbongo, once again pitting their polo skills against the Audi team - and winning! - and was in aid of three charities, English Schools' Swimming Association (ESSA), Skillforce and Mountain Rescue, of which William is patron.

An impressive list of VIP guests included familiar faces from the world of film, TV and music including Keeley Hawes, Matthew McFadyen, Duffy, Lemar and Jon Culshaw. Dinner was 'designed' by James Martin - featuring the scotch egg that wasn't (one thousand eggs lightly boiled and peeled to achieve 250 perfect eggs. And they'd started on Thursday. Apparently.) The delightfully ditzzy Paloma Faith entertained us in the evening, after an impromptu warm-up turn from Jon Culshaw. The champagne flowed and the rain stayed away - what more could we ask?

In was William's first game of the season, playing alongside England player Mark Tomlinson, England manager Andrew Hine and owner of Thai Polo Club, Harald Link. The final result was close but Umbongo pipped Audi to an 8:5½ goal victory.

A great day out and a donation of £20,000 for Mountain Rescue, so thank you Audi UK for your hospitality and generosity. Interesting to note that this is now the fifth polo match - three with Audi UK - to which we've been invited, with donations which now amount to over £100,000.

Quick note about the other charities represented there... ESSA (The English Schools' Swimming Association) was formed in 1949 and exists to encourage school children throughout England to learn to swim and compete in swimming, diving, water polo and synchronised swimming at several levels including World and European School Games. Many of its participants have gone on to represent Great Britain in the Olympics.

SkillForce is an education charity that works with 10,000 young people throughout 150 schools in Great Britain, working with children who are in danger of leaving school without the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life. **JW**

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

...well Dave MacLeod certainly got the Editor chatting, thanks to a posting on his blog pointing out what mountain rescue should be doing to promote itself and raise funds, including such things as publishing books, telling rescue tales and getting sponsorship... which, er... we already are – locally, regionally and nationally. Cue a little frustration on my part that our messages don't seem to be getting through, despite our best efforts. Got some great support from other Facebookers – so thanks to all of you for that. Further conversation with Dave (privately) has smoothed the waters – and he's come up with some very useful advice as well as posting, on his blog, my response to his initial comments – but I'm still at a loss to understand how our website, our Facebook page, our magazine or any of our publications had escaped his attention. Mmmm... must try harder.

...then there was the update from the chap who fell 1000 feet in January, stunning rescuers with his lack of injury (or absence of death, come to that!) suffering only three broken bones in his back, a cracked rib and concussion in the Grey Corries fall. In May, he summited Everest. Something of an eventful year for him, then!

...of course, we had the Royal Wedding in April, with lots of support and congratulations for the happy couple from our Facebook fans.

...and much discussion about the use of mobile phone apps to navigate the hills, maps firmly unpurchased. In fact, great little piece on Easter Monday BBC News about this whole topic, in which a young woman, asked whether she would use a phone app to find her way round in the hills, rather than a map, answered cheerily, 'Yes!' So, what happens when the batteries run out? 'Well, I'd be stuffed!' came the response. I think I've ever so slightly paraphrased that, but you get the idea.

...and finally, one Facebooker tried to auction April MR Mag, still in plastic wrapper, on ebay. Not sure of the outcome but it didn't seem to be going too well last time I looked. I'll try not to take it too personally.

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

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Diary of an Editor

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



Wasdale 'wave off' at St Bees...

Okay, I know what you're thinking, you big butch mountaineering types, you: COAST TO COAST WALK? Piece of cake. Highest point WHAT? Kidsty Pike? 780 metres? Pah! Cop a look at MY holiday snaps!

Only teasing, as I know you wouldn't be so rude, but got to start somehow. And, it has to be said, this WAS a bit of a personal challenge for me, walking thirteen consecutive days, some as long as 24 miles, over a variety of terrain with, as it transpired, a spot of caving thrown in for good measure.

See, I might edit this worthy publication but, in the scheme of things, I'm a bit of a latecomer to this hillwalking lark. But the idea to take a holiday 'doing' the Coast to Coast, and raise money for mountain rescue at the same time, was hugely appealing. Although, as soon became clear,

this was no holiday, as the fundraising and PR aspects very quickly grew considerable wings!

Having planned the route and booked the B&Bs, with my fellow Rossendale and Pendle team member Gail, our initial thought was just to say hello to rescue teams as we passed through each 'patch' – ten teams in all, with Swaledale MRT covering three of our stops – with the odd photo loitering by a team vehicle. But, when we realised our start date fell on Mountain and Cave Rescue Awareness Day, Monday 2 May, the PR opportunity proved just too good to miss, and teams far exceeded my expectations – meeting us, walking with us, devising ways to entertain us, and basically turning us into mountain rescue vehicle 'tarts'! Much to the amusement of our fellow Coast to Coasters: 'So which team is it tonight then, girls?' a frequent cry across the fells.

Paramo offered us sponsorship (with our now 'signature' magenta jackets), local mountain rescue-friendly retailer, Whalley Warm and Dry provided some extra layers, and the 'Twirlies on Tour' were launched! Knowing I would be armed with an iPad for blogging purposes, ViewRanger offered

us the mapping for the entire walk – a handy back up to paper maps and compass. All the teams responded positively to my emails and we even acquired our own press officer in Sally Seed, of Stoneleigh Communications! But, for me, the icing on the cake was Sir Chris Bonington – veteran of so many challenges far greater than this – who agreed to walk with us between Rosthwaite and Grasmere. WOW.

So, off we set from St Bee's beach on a glorious sunny morning, waved off by Wasdale team members. And, in fact, narrowly escaping a fast approaching tide which, in the time it took for a few minutes' live interview with BBC Radio Cumbria, had turned the gentle mound of sand on which the team vehicle had been so expertly posed for photogenic effect, into an island – surrounded by a rapidly deepening moat! Undaunted, toes well and truly dipped in the Irish Sea, obligatory pebbles in pockets, we were off, round that beautiful, blustery headland.

Now, when Wainwright devised this route, he certainly had no intention of making it a direct line. Anything but. In the beginning and end bits especially, he appears to have gone out of his way to have you almost going round in a

complete circle before striking out for your actual destination, at the start of your journey – or deliberately avoiding the most direct (and considerably shorter) route to your final stop, at the end. (Perhaps, in the latter case, because he knew that by now, despite having spent several days earlier in the trip wishing this torture would end, you would have an unexpected, demob-happy, spring in your step and actively want to prolong the joy of achieving your goal, just that little bit longer.) The upshot is you get some exhilarating cliff top walking with some stunning sea views.

Leaving the sea, you finally head inland – the Cumbrian mountains an enticing blue haze in the distance – through fields and along lanes, until gradually the terrain begins to undulate and change, promise of things to come. Some time before Ennerdale Bridge, search dog Jake scampering ahead of her, handler Laura appeared, the forward party for a group from the Cockermouth team. Cue photo opportunity, en route to the Fox and Hounds and a well earned drink in the evening sun, made all the more enjoyable by the tray of still-warm flapjack, magicked out of Laura's car boot. Yum. We were rather hoping she might appear at each subsequent stop, armed



...er, it's raining in Patterdale...



...more rain (and clog) on Kidsty Pike with Penrith



...almost through a 24 mile slog, ably egged on by Kirkby Stephen

with fresh supplies – or at least forward the recipe to each team. Didn't happen.

But, d'you know, I'm writing this now and thinking 'do they really want to hear a blow by blow account of our every step?' Been said before, when all said and done, thanks to Wainwright and Julia, to name but two. So... with a nod to the Twirlies blog here's the highlights.

Most anticipation question? Well that HAS to be 'Why Twirlies?' Why indeed, when a quick search online reveals, how shall we say, a diversity of definition. Delete as appropriate: 'young, cute, sexy female dancers, generally of theatrical background'... (er, don't think so...) or, at the other end of the scale, the pensioner option – 'you know, the ones who stand at bus stops with their free passes and ask if they are 'too early' because it is not yet 9.30am'... (erm... nope...)

In truth, it's all thanks to a certain team member who expressed some surprise when confronted with an almost entirely female rescue party, shortly after falling over in a fell race, injuring himself quite badly. I believe he remarked that the number of 'twirlies' in this particular team appeared to be higher than in Rossendale. Which didn't go down too well. His use of the word 'twirlies' that is. And given his injuries, he might have chosen wiser words. Lucky to escape with his life, I gather.

And then the story got bandied about a bit, not least of all by Gail and me as we wandered the peat bogs of Lancashire, catching up on the goss and plotting our Coast to Coast adventure. Then a light bulb moment: 'Twirlies on tour! That's it! That's what we'll call it...' and, you've got to admit, it

does have a certain alliterative ring to it...

And strictly no bus passes or ballet shoes used in the taking of this trip. Honest.

Most fun? Nothing to do with coast to coasting, actually. Rather, a very squealing-with-laughter evening spent slithering through the silt down Crackpot Cave. And to understand the full enormity of this particular activity, you need to know that this is the woman of whom a fellow team member once enquired, 'Is that designer mud on your boots?' so sceptical was he I might actually set foot on a fellside. As I said, a hillwalking latecomer.

Anyway, back in the Dales, pick up was duly arranged for around 5.00pm. Our landlady Susan, appears in the dining room. 'There's a couple of men at the door asking for you.' (Something of a recurring theme throughout the trip!)

It's Pete and Tony from the Swaledale team, and we're also waiting for Richard and David to arrive. Polite chit chat. Wee bit of banter. They've got 'a little something' organised for us.

'Mmmm... won't have to crawl anywhere, will I?'

'Noooo...' says Tony, shaking his head in a very sincere manner.

'Cos, the thing IS, I say, I don't really DO caves...'

'You'll be fine, just a photo opportunity...'

'So I don't need a change of clothes then?'

'Noooo...' (VERY sincere face: he's REALLY good at this) 'You'll be fine as you are.'

'Or, maybe just bring a spare pair of trousers. For the pub. Oh, and perhaps a pair of socks...'

'Soo... I won't get wet then?'

'Nooooo...' God, he's good.

'Well maybe your feet. Won't be higher than your knees...'

So. Half an hour later, I am being zipped into a yellow waterproof suit, pushing my woolly-trousered legs into borrowed wellies, being instructed on the machinations of the head torch strapped to my very battered caving helmet. And off we set down a steep little clamber to a hole in the ground. A very dark hole in the ground.

'Don't worry,' says Pete. 'Just do as I do...' And he's gone. Shit! Now I have to follow him! I cannot BELIEVE I am doing this, as I slither wellies first through a hole in the rock, feet headed deep into goodness only knows where.

Okay, that worked. Rest. Breathe. And then he's off again. 'Just turn onto your side, tuck your feet under your body, turn over, and...!' His final words lost to the darkness as I digest the improbability of tucking my legs up any way at all right here, let alone turning over to slide, bum first, into oblivion. Then I realise it's my turn again. And now!!

And so it continued, limbs in knots I never dreamed possible, hauling myself along on my stomach, a human slug slithering through muck, banging my head on the 'ceiling', and gathering so many bruises I think someone took me out and beat me up while I wasn't looking! And wet!!!! One very soggy left sock, trousers sodden (despite the fetching yellow suit), hands, face and feet caked in orange cack... apart from that I was dry as a bone. I will, however, be dining out on the photos for quite some time!

Least endearing? The long, boring foot-slog between Richmond and Ingleby Cross: field after field after field (over stile after stile after stile) of wheat, barley, rape, wheat, barley, rape... repeat until you

lose the will to live or for 24 miles – whichever comes first. When we finally reached The Blue Bell Inn, my fellow Twirlie fell on the bed, and straight off to sleep. No glass of wine. No dinner. No shower. Leaving me to stagger into the bar alone like Billy No Mates. Tough job but...

Least convincing bit of trivia? The sign pinned to the lychgate of the church in Bolton on Swale, where we stopped for the guidebook's recommended breather in the grounds. 'Here lies the body of Henry Jenkins,' read the note, 'who lived to the ripe old age of 169!' We think the stonemason might have sneezed at the wrong moment.

Most impressive hospitality? The honesty boxes. See, those Yorkshire folk just KNOW you're going to be bored out of your tree that day. Very early on. So, starting just before old Henry's resting place, the route was peppered with small tables, cool boxes and buckets, stacked with cold drinks, home baked flapjack (sadly not Laura's), packets of crisps, fresh fruit and – best of all, although we didn't indulge – a chalk-written message on slate: ice cream round the corner in the shed. One wonders whether, had we staggered any further, the ante might have been upped: house keys on the hook by the back door, Land Rover on the drive, tank full...

Newest skill? Aside from dragging myself through a rocky slash in the ground by my forearms without so much as breaking a nail, that'd be the newfound ability to fall asleep on a clothes line, as my granny used to say. Walking thirteen consecutive days, three of which were over the twenty-mark, is quite tiring. Unless, I guess, you're super-fit. And yes, there were a couple of days



On to Ennerdale Bridge for flapjack with Cockermouth...



'If you wanna sit here - you pay!' Collecting at Black Sail.



Evening sun and Keswick at the Scafell Hotel...



...Beer and apps with Sir Chris and Langdale Ambleside in Grasmere

PHOTOS THANKS TO: WASDALE MRT, JUDY WHITESIDE, PAUL BURKE, DAVE STEWART, TONY HARRISON, PETE ROE, SCARBOROUGH & RYEDALE MRT

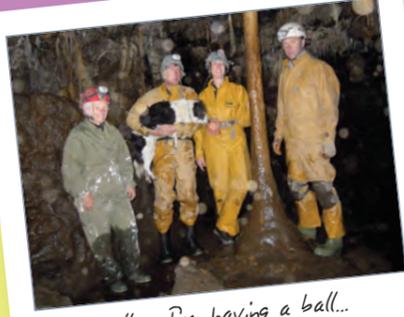




Swaledale... before the fun REALLY started...



So you think you're coming through here, huh?



No... really... I'm having a ball...



...heading for the rapids in the shadow of Richmond Castle...



Another long day to the Lion Inn and the company of Cleveland

when the hips had to rearrange themselves a little somewhere between waking up and breakfast but, generally, by the time the boots were laced, everything seemed to work quite well again. Amazing really.

Which leads me to my secret weapon... Timothy's tennis ball. See, before we set out on our little adventure, I spent quite some time training up: successive weekends spent tramping the hills and mountains, moorland bogs and canal towpaths, interspersed with regular gym sessions. Thing was: the closer our trip, the more my life began to resemble the 'set-up' scenes on some dodgy TV reality makeover show, the odds against my even starting the trip mounting ever higher.

First there was the slip on scree coming off High Stile (broken finger nail, bruised bum, grazed coccyx), and the dehydration (very hot day, seriously underestimated how much water I'd need - won't make that mistake again in a hurry!), followed by a points-earning backflip off a stepping stone in the-beck-that-bit-back (very, VERY bruised ribs, soggy pants). Some day out that was!

At some point, too, I acquired a 'tweaky' knee - fine for most of my walking or running but every now and then, it just 'tweaks' - cue a session with Tim, my chiropractor, and some instruction from him on how to inflict pain on myself by the judicious application of thumb pressure. And it does seem to do the trick. Once I've stopped myself screaming.

And then, as if not being able to breathe thanks to increasingly painful ribs wasn't enough, the

birch pollen decided to put in an unseasonably early appearance - prompting friends to ask if I'm okay because my 'breathing sounds a bit laboured'. Just what you need when you're attempting to walk across England, taking in the odd hill here and there.

And THEN, out with a seasoned long distance walker friend (in whose wake uphill I am often to be found puffing, panting and generally begging for mercy), I realised the pain in my ribs had migrated to my right hip! Cue another little trick from Tim involving pinning a fluorescent tennis ball (although I have to confess the day-glo bit is not mandatory!) to the wall with my bum, and wriggling around until I find the spot that REALLY hurts, then applying even more pressure. I generally stop when the screaming gets too loud. Heaven knows what the neighbours must think.

So, my advice to you, dear reader, when setting out on a prolonged walking trip, is always pack your balls!

But I digress... we certainly made some memories along the way, not to mention friends. There was Rachel's parrot - at Gillercombe B&B in Rosthwaite - an African Grey, with whom Rachel insisted we have our photo taken. As we did. Very gingerly.

Or Mavis and Sylvia, two lovely older ladies in Burnbanks who'd seen us on the telly, knew when we'd set off, had estimated when we'd be coming through and kept an eye on the lane for our arrival - their sole intention to pop some money in our collecting box!

Or the look on our fellow Coast to Coasters' faces when we

wandered past, deep in conversation with Sir Chris. 'Er... my wife thinks that looks like Chris Bonington...' whispered one such in my ear. 'It is,' said I. 'Did you just bump into him?' 'No,' says I, 'we ARRANGED to meet him,' affecting nonchalance whilst barely resisting the temptation to punch the air before run round in small circles with a football jersey over my head (okay I didn't actually HAVE a football jersey, but you get my drift) Yessss!

And Sir Chris was very good company - great conversation and a good giggle - and we had him all to ourselves for the stretch between Rosthwaite and Grasmere, chatting about all sorts of stuff: his expeditions (of course) and mountain rescue (ditto), the relative merits of all things Apple, and apps. Oh yes, apps. Suffice to say, ViewRanger gained a fan that day.

What struck me most that day was how life brings those things to you which are for you. Five or six years ago, when Bob Sharp and I launched our book, at the Kendal Mountain Book Festival, we were sandwiched between a line up of mountaineering greats: George Band, Doug Scott... and Sir Chris Bonington, on after us in the book signing stakes. Feeling I should say hello, not least as a fellow author, I chickened out, not knowing what to say by way of a starter! And here I was, six years later, sharing a day on the hill with him, swapping iPad tips.

I probably should mention the cows, too. Six of them, to be precise. Between Muker and Reeth. Now, more often than not, cows will either stand in studied bovine disdain as you

pass, or head in the opposite direction. But not today.

Approaching one of the many, very narrow, spring-loaded gates in this section, it became clear the path was closely guarded. By said cows. And they were all looking our way. Er, no, actually, they were MOVING our way. Cue a rather rapid dredging up from somewhere deep in memory of my own advice on reaching cows in a field ('Call out mountain rescue?' - a snip at £9.99 lol!!).

1: Let dog off lead - he'll sort himself out and run faster than either you or the cows if chased! (That one's easy. No dog.)

2: Identify the nearest exit. (Yep! I've identified it. It's the one immediately behind the cows. Those cows that are closing in on us.)

3: Don't panic! (Shiiiiiiiiit!)

4: CLAP YOUR HANDS! (Not panicking, honest!)

Well, d'you know what... it worked. Clapped a couple of times, the cows parted, leaving the footpath clear towards the gate, which we headed for RATHER quickly. Just as well because they were pretty bright those cows, realising pretty damn soon that they were, in fact, bigger than us. And back in they came, just as the second of Gail's little legs squeeze through the gap. And there they stayed for quite some time huddled together on the other side of the gate. Our bovine friends that is, not Gail's little legs!

The most amazing bit for me was the way the teams engaged with this whole idea - not least of all in their spirited competition for 'best potential front cover'! A big thanks to all those team members who turned out to support us along the way - not

sure we'd have had quite so much fun without you! So, working from west to east...

Wasdale, of course, waved us off admirably. Thank you Richard for getting us (and Páramo!) so much exposure on BBC TV (national news no less and not just once, not twice, but five times) and Radio Cumbria. Along the way, incidentally, other teams also used the Twirlies passing through their area as an opportunity for PR so, if nothing else, I hope our little jolly managed to spread the word about mountain rescue to a wider audience.

From Wasdale team then, to Cockermouth, and on to Keswick (whose pagers went off just as they were set to tuck into their pints at the Scafell Hotel), and Langdale Ambleside (who were delayed meeting us because THEIR pagers had gone off an hour before - beginning to think it's us now...) then over the hill to Patterdale (where Gail did a sterling job at their base, helping them stuff envelopes and I availed myself of the wi-fi).

From Patterdale, via a very claggy Kidsty Pike (all 780 metres of it) and the welcome sight of three Penrith red jackets looming through the mist in our direction (now we know how the casualty feels!) to Kirkby Stephen (long, long day topped with a cracking Indian meal at The Mango Tree).

Swaledale, I think we're agreed, took the prize for 'most innovative entertainment', over three activity-filled days in their area ('A*' for raft ride, 'Distinction' for the whole caving caboodle).

On to Cleveland and the 'Pete and Gari Show' (you had to be there, but those who know

them, know) and a great day across the moors in the company of their PR Officer Barry Warrington.

And, finally Scarborough and Ryedale who, despite our feeling distinctly creaky and more than a little weary, turned our last day into a party, all the way from Grosmont to Robin Hood's Bay. What with the small group walking along with us, the regular popping up of two team vehicles and team members armed with cameras, stops at Midge Hall (beware the Pebble Police!) and the pub, it was laughs and banter all the way.

Martin Wainwright, in 'The Coast to Coast Walk' warns against imagining, on your triumphant arrival in Robin Hood's Bay, that there'll be cheering crowds to greet you. Day trippers knocking about, he claims, are 'unlikely to know about your amazing feat and wouldn't care if they did.' Well, how wrong could he have been? What with the Scarborough team vehicle parked on the slipway, sea lapping at the cobbles behind it, the MREW banner strung across the 'finishing line', Huw Birrell popping a bottle of pink fizz over our weary heads, Sally on hand with the hot chocolate, friends and family with copious quantities of home-baked cake, the national fundraising officer (just checking we'd made it, no doubt) and, of course, any number of Scarborough and Ryedale team members, it couldn't have been better.

And I could go on, but you've probably got rope to knot, karabiners to polish. But, if you fancy leaving all those clinky bits of kit behind for a couple of weeks, I can thoroughly

recommend the Coast to Coast. The route meanders across the country (we did it the conventional way: west to east from St Bees, through Ennerdale, Rosthwaite, Grasmere, Patterdale, Shap and Kirkby Stephen in the Lakes, and on through the Dales, along the magnificently sweeping River Swale via Keld, Muker and Reeth to Richmond, through the fields to Ingleby Cross before striking up and over the North Yorkshire Moors to Blakey Ridge and beyond to Grosmont, then dropping back down to the North Sea at Robin Hood's Bay.

The walking bit is brill - every possible sort of terrain for an English walk: fields and lanes, deep, deep bogs and blackened groughs, scree paths and scramble bits, streams and becks, lakes and rivers, gentle climbs and steeply engineered steps, wild woolly moorland with big, big skies, wooded valleys and ambling coastal paths and, of course, you can always chuck in the odd ridge or peaky bit.

We were incredibly lucky with the weather so the views, especially in the Lakes, were stunning - mountains and crags in pin-sharp clarity, deep blue lakes, sun dappled woodland, awash with bluebells and garlic - the waterfalls largely tucked in the rucksack, 'just in case'. In fact, our last two hours were the wettest, as the heavens opened with a squall of hail stones, churning sun-baked paths into leg-spattering mud, and soaking us to the skin.

We booked our overnight stays independently - every one a gem in its own

way, the Full English breakfast alive and well - and the bags were carried between stops by Sherpa Van, so we only needed day sacks.

The ViewRanger and iPad combo, incidentally, worked a dream. Apart from allowing me to carry my music and the odd episode of Green Wing, download pix from the camera, and to email and blog (flaky internet connections permitting) the iPad proved a handy back up to our maps. The GPS works whether or not there's a phone signal and the battery life lasted beyond the expected ten hours. Had I been carrying it before me like a tea tray and using it instead of the paper maps, battery time would have been seriously impaired, but that wouldn't have been sensible now, would it?

With the current mountain rescue concern that more walkers are relying on smartphone apps to navigate their way in the hills, and getting lost as a result, this may seem contentious. Paper maps don't need batteries. And, of course, you do still need to be able to read a map!

The iPad screen is great for this: it's A5, there's a great ability to zoom in and out (so you get the wider context of the map) and the ViewRanger maps themselves are 1:25 000. The Buddy Beacon allows others to track you as you travel - great for the teams meeting us, who could estimate our time of arrival more accurately, and hours of fun for friends at home who just love sending you texts to the effect you're in the tea shop and



...It's party time! Robin Hood's Bay here we come!



haven't moved for ages, so get a shift on!!) I do think there's a place for this technology, used sensibly, and if you can spare the space in the rucksack – with paper map and compass, of course, the first line of action.

Somewhere along the way, we raised a few bob (around £3200 as I write) and a heck of a lot of public awareness about mountain rescue. Still a teensy bit shy of our target of £5000 so, if you do have any change rattling about down the sofa, why not check out justgiving.com/twirliesontour and pledge it there? The money will help kick start the new benevolent fund for mountain rescue – being steered by Huw – which is aimed at bridging the gaps in times of hardship if a rescue team member gets injured, or is killed, whilst undertaking a rescue. God forbid it's ever needed in the future, but we know there have been occasions, over the years, when just such a fund might have been a comfort. It's been a long time coming.

Anyway, I'm off now to find another challenge... any suggestions? Just so long as it doesn't include a yellow caving suit and wellies... or copious quantities of cake.

(Okay, I lied about the last bit.)

THE OPTIONS:

There are four suggested options for the Coast to Coast: Stop and Stare (17 days), Leisurely (15 days), Standard (13 days) and Super Fit (11 days). We chose the Standard, so still plenty of time to take in the view but the longer days can be a slog. Along the route, there are also various options to take the 'high road' – via Red Pike and High Stile from Ennerdale, for example, or over Helvellyn to Patterdale. We chose the line of least resistance – enticing though the hills appeared, especially in that first week with the sun beating down!

WHERE WE STAYED:

ST BEES: FAIRLADIES BARN

Seventeenth century sandstone barn, comfortable, good breakfast but a mile away from the start so adds on to the day's walk (unless, of course, you get a lift in the Wasdale team vehicle...)

ENNERDALE BRIDGE: THE CLOGGERS

Two bedroom, dinky cottage, bit of a tussle getting bags up the narrow stairs and sharing a bathroom/loo with the other guests was a bit awkward. Very peaceful though, apart from the magnificent birdsong which prevented our fellow clients from sleeping, so used were they to the sound of planes taking off and landing over their heads at Stansted airport! And a host with an entertaining line in anecdotes about the exploits of previous Coast to Coasters!

ROTHSWAITE: GILLERCOMBE

Eccentricity personified, Rachel and her parrot made our day. Very comfortable room, tea and biscuits on arrival, immaculate bathroom, good night's sleep and mega-breakfast! No wi-fi.

GRASMERE: GRASMERE HOTEL

Okay, an indulgence and the most expensive stay but very pleasant. Although I think we were the youngest people in the dining room by about twenty years...

PATTERDALE: THE WHITE LION

Couldn't not stay here, what with it being Patterdale team's watering hole, bang on the route... and the food being so GOOD. Iffy wi-fi and zero mobile signal though.

SHAP: THE HERMITAGE

The BIGGEST breakfast we have ever seen: enough for four served on a platter. Really couldn't do it justice. Oh and I got a telling off from the hostess for checking my mobile at the breakfast table. Oops...

KIRKBY STEPHEN: FLETCHER HOUSE

Route goes past the door (yesss!) and our bags had magicked themselves upstairs. A lot of do-it-yourself in the breakfast department: coffee machine, toaster, you

THE ROUTE (APPROX MILEAGE):

ST BEES TO ENNERDALE BRIDGE: 15 MILES
ENNERDALE TO ROTHSWAITE: 15 MILES
ROTHSWAITE TO GRASMERE: 9 MILES
GRASMERE TO PATERDALE: 8 MILES
PATERDALE TO SHAP: 16 MILES
SHAP TO KIRKBY STEPHEN: 21 MILES
KIRKBY STEPHEN TO MUKER: 15 MILES
MUKER TO REETH: 8 MILES
REETH TO RICHMOND: 11 MILES
RICHMOND TO INGLEBY CROSS: 24 MILES
INGLEBY CROSS TO BLAKEY RIDGE: 21 MILES
BLAKEY RIDGE TO GROSMONT: 14 MILES
GROSMONT TO ROBIN HOOD'S BAY: 15 MILES.

know the sort of thing... if I'm being honest, if I'm paying for the privilege, think I'd rather be waited on hand and weary foot.

MUKER: SWALE FARM

Lovely, lovely couple running this B&B, which we gather has been the family business for several generations. Very friendly, chatty and a great breakfast. Had to drag Gail away else she'd still be chatting now...

REETH: THE BARN HOME FARM

The BEST chocolate cake in the Dales. The hostess was delighted to have us stay so she could 'bring out the pink sheets!' Definitely worth a visit.

RICHMOND: 16 BEECHFIELD

Comfy enough and a good breakfast but 'quaint' best sums it up. Oh, and half a bottle of wine in the room which we forgot to drink. Doh!

INGLEBY CROSS: THE BLUE BELL INN

Our most basic accommodation (not that it bothered Gail who fell asleep on arrival and didn't wake up till morning). The only pub in the village, so a Mecca for thirsty C2Cers.

BLAKEY RIDGE: THE LION INN

THE most welcome sight after two day's slogging across Yorkshire, appearing like a mirage on the horizon. The scampi and chips didn't touch the sides. Iffy wi-fi.

GROSMONT: GROSMONT HOUSE

If stuffed animals and dusty artefacts is your thing then this is your place. Breakfast lukewarm, sadly not a patch on the rest.

ROBIN HOOD'S BAY: MANNING TREE

I didn't hang around for this evening's stay but Gail reckons it was a good 'un. And the hostess DID allow me to use the shower facilities before I left, at no extra charge, which I thought was very kind. Worth a return.

Judy W, Editor xx

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ViewRanger usage and take up by mountain rescue continue to grow

ViewRanger take up and usage amongst the UK's search and rescue teams continues to grow on a weekly basis. In addition to England and Wales teams, we are delighted to have entered into agreements with Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, and Lowland Search Dogs to make it quicker and easier for those affiliated with these organisations to join the ViewRanger VSAR programme.

We really appreciate team feedback and we wanted to share here a couple of experiences from people using ViewRanger for real.

The first is using ViewRanger's BuddyBeacon real-time location sharing (requires mobile signal). With the use of flat screens mounted in some incident control vehicles, we've been made aware of search coordinators using the video output (HDMI), available in some mobile devices, to project the location of team members onto the big screen to make search planning and the remote tracking of search or training activity easier.

The second utilises ViewRanger's combination of GPS mapped location and track recording, to help make the end man's job, of both accurate navigation and search, a little easier. Rob Dixon at Dartmoor Rescue Group tells us, 'I have long thought ViewRanger would be extremely useful for the end man in a search team, where the team sweeps across its search area. Last week I was able to put ViewRanger to the test for the first time to assist in this role. When I had to divert around gorse, I was able to get back on track accurately and efficiently. The line walked was recorded and could, of course, be shown to the controller later if necessary.

'I found that using ViewRanger gave me great confidence in being able to say we had searched the area thoroughly, with no gaps. It also enabled me to spend more time actually searching rather than concentrating on keeping the team on course whilst also searching.'

To find out more or join ViewRanger's VSAR programme go to viewranger.com/SAR.



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MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION SELECT BLAZEPOINT TO SUPPORT HIGH-ALTITUDE MOUNTAINEERING EXERCISE



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CASE STUDY: EXERCISE TIGER KARAKORAM

In October 2010, an eleven strong expedition, from the Army Mountaineering Association, travelled to India with the aim of conducting exploratory mountaineering in the Himachal Pradesh region and summiting several unclimbed peaks. Commenting on the area Major Matt Hing, Expedition Leader, said that 'the Himachal Pradesh area of northern India offers a vast amount of mountaineering opportunity. There are tens, if not hundreds, of unclimbed peaks and unexplored glaciers that would make excellent mountaineering expeditions. This is a fantastic area'.

Whilst the history of military mountaineering can trace its roots back into the nineteenth century, the Army Mountaineering Association has been formally sending mountaineers to all corners of the world for the last 53 years. Exercise Tiger Karakoram was a continuation of this tradition.

The team was equipped and prepared to climb 'alpine style' throughout. This minimised their impact on these untouched mountains and fitted in with the ethics of the team. Employing alpine techniques of moving light and fast on unclimbed peaks in the Himalaya required a level of competence, confidence and a state-of-mind that allowed for that additional level of commitment. For most of the expedition

team, this was their first time in the Himalaya and most have never been so high before. Team training and selection, whilst developing the hard-skills required for mountaineering, had focused on the soft-skills required to mentally prepare for such a challenge.

Things, however, did not go to plan and there were constant adjustments to meet changing circumstances. For example, ill equipped porters and unseasonal snow storms provided additional challenges. Despite this, success came early when three members of the expedition made a first ascent of Peak 5900 naming it 'Sher Khan'.

Later, one of the climbing teams turned back at 5922m on an unclimbed 6030m peak, after encountering increasingly technical and committing ground. Then an unseasonal snow storm deposited a foot of snow over the area making the climbing conditions too dangerous. With another storm forecast there was concern that they would be trapped at Base Camp, and so they moved south to a different climbing area. From there they climbed a 5928m high peak, 'Hanuman Tibba'.

The expedition members were tested mentally and physically by the harsh conditions (living at 4600m+), the weather (-13°C in the tent at night) and the climbing. Dynamic risk



The ruggedised laptops sustained plenty of knocks and **unavoidable ill-treatment during transit** and on the mountain **but they handled the trauma with ease**
They continued to perform to an optimal level in temperatures as low as -20°C for over five weeks.
Major Matt Hing, Expedition Leader

assessments, leadership, teamwork and physical toughness were all developed throughout the expedition, including a range of other personal attributes and skills vital to operational capability.

Sergeant Mark Dowland, summarised his experience: 'As a developing mountaineer this



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▶ **page 37**

expedition was an invaluable experience and insight into the world of high altitude mountaineering. As soldiers we are taught to prepare for the unexpected, but exploratory mountaineering provided us all with extreme physical and mental challenges. It definitely pushed all of the expedition members beyond their comfort zones'.

PHOTO: © UK MOD CROWN COPYRIGHT



The expedition had a robust communications plan in order to keep in touch with home and also in case of emergencies. In addition, support was provided by the India-based RIMO Expeditions. The wish to use an India-based company was a critical factor in the planning to ensure any fees paid go to India.

BGAN Satellite Antenna's in

conjunction with Blazepoint's ndura RUGGED® laptops facilitated email, telephony, the blog and Wx updates. The antennae, provided with free air time by Thales UK, produced an outstanding performance and future expeditions must continue to comms recce potential campsites to ascertain whether the BGAN can 'hit' the satellites in a geo-stationary orbit over the equator. Maj. Matt Hing commented, 'Provided by Blazepoint, the ruggedised laptops sustained plenty of knocks and unavoidable ill-treatment during transit and on the mountain. They handled the trauma with ease and continued to perform to an optimal level in temperatures as low as -20°C for over five weeks, providing a quality service for internet access, word processing and information exchange. Exercise Tiger Karakoram chose these laptops based on robustness, endurance and the ability to perform in an arduous environment and they did not disappoint.'

For further details about ndura RUGGED® laptops, contact James Munger-Styles of Blazepoint Limited on 01865 892050 or email sales@blazepoint.co.uk or check out their website at blazepoint.co.uk.

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With the unique Active 10 map toggling feature changing between map scales or maps of the same area is easy. At the press of one button the area will be displayed in different scales (for example OS 1:50k or 1:25k) or on a different map (OS Street View® or custom aerial mapping). With this function it is easy to switch to the relevant detail and set of information.

Knowledge, preparation and the right equipment are crucial when in the mountains and not only for the professionals. satmap.co.uk



REVIEW
Gear



SUMMARY OF THE HANDHELD NAUTIZ X3 REVIEW AT RUGGEDPCREVIEW.COM

POCKET-SIZED ULTRA-RUGGED MULTI-PURPOSE COMPUTER: ALL-IN-ONE PDA/SCANNER/GPS/PHONE

By Conrad H. Blickenstorfer

What the Handheld Group offers with the Nautiz X3 is a very rugged handheld computer that packs a punch but is smaller and handier than most. It also offers phone functionality, but we'd see that as an additional feature rather than the device's main purpose. Built around Microsoft Windows Mobile 6.5 and the 806MHz Marvell PXA320 processor (the fastest currently available XScale processor for mobile devices), the Nautiz X3 provides mature and very widely supported hardware and software technology that fits into almost all existing IT infrastructures.

Equipped with a QVGA 2.8-inch touch display, the Nautiz X3 can function both as a PDA as well as a full function quad-band GSM/GPRS/EDGE smartphone and a tri-band UMTS/HSDPA data



communicator (all you have to do is insert an activated SIM). Despite its extreme temperature tolerance, excellent sealing and ability to survive 6-foot drops, the X3 weighs less than ten ounces. It's an elegant, well-made and trust-inspiring tool for the job. The Nautiz X3 combines a lot of functionality into one small package. It is a full-function handheld computer with PIM,

email, messaging, browsing and numerous utilities. A large number of readily downloadable apps are available from the Windows Marketplace. There's integrated GPS for mapping and GIS applications.

For data capture there is a laser or 2D barcode scanner. An internal 3-megapixel camera with LED illuminator light can be used to document data and shoot video. The numeric keypad allows for very rapid data entry. The unit's replaceable battery provides full-day operation.

Nothing is ever perfect, and we'd like to see a faster, better camera and a less glossy display surface. And like everyone else, we're certain that Handheld is keeping a close eye on emerging OS and digitiser technologies.

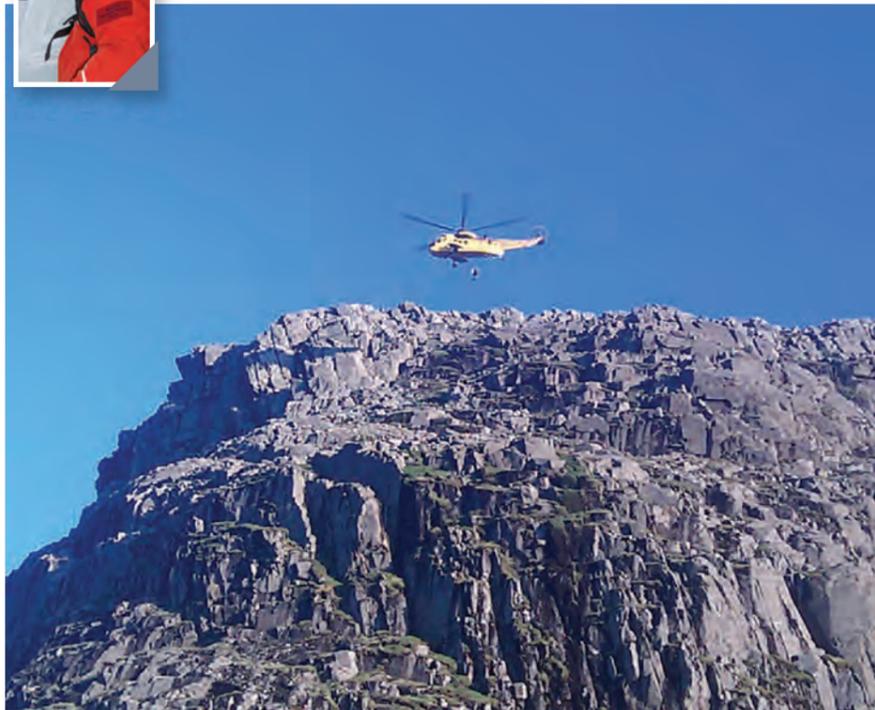
Overall, with the Nautiz X3 Handheld offers an elegant and very compact mobile computer that integrates a highly useful combination of computing, GPS, communications and data capture technologies into one single rugged device that's still small and light enough to fit into most pockets. Find the full article online at <http://tinyurl.com/642f4jf>

QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES JANUARY-MARCH 2011

Thursday 2 June: Rescue on Broad Crag – when technology goes right!!



Mike Gullen
Duty Team Leader, Wasdale MRT



After a quiet start to the year normal service was resumed for Wasdale team in June. By this I mean carrying out more than one job in a day. At around 3:15pm on Thursday 2nd, we were paged by Cumbria Police to respond to a 77-year-old male with severe leg cramp on the summit of Great Gable.

To save a long and protracted carry off an air ambulance was requested to assist. It was around 25°C, the hottest day of the year by far and the valley was full of tourists and Three Peakers as we drove to Gavel Knees at the base of Great Gable. This, as far as rescues for the Wasdale team go, was relatively straightforward: four team members lifted to the casualty site to assist the air ambulance crew and walk the casualty's partner and two dogs off. The rest of the team walked up with back up gear, in the event the helicopter had to abort, until we had confirmed the helicopter had lifted with the casualty on board.

As this rescue was coming to an end and half

the team had headed home for their tea – as most, if not all of us, had come straight from work – I was alerted to another page from Cumbria Police reference an incident on Scafell Pike.

Not known to us at the time, but this rescue was not going to be as straightforward as the last. I took the details from the police which at first seemed like two people had got themselves lost on the descent from Scafell Pike to Borrowdale.

As I was in the valley at the time and asked our base to contact the lost persons to try and ascertain their location. As I made this request further information came in to say one of them had fallen around 20/25 metres and had a head and arm injury and he was losing blood. From the communications I was receiving regarding the location of this incident, details were rather vague on the casualty's part, so I suggested they send us a photograph of his location.

It took some time, however, when the photograph arrived the team members on the base quickly identified their location as Broad Crag looking at Round How, Stand Crag and Sty Head Tarn. As with most mountain rescue teams, all Wasdale team members have extensive local knowledge of the patch, ranging from Bob

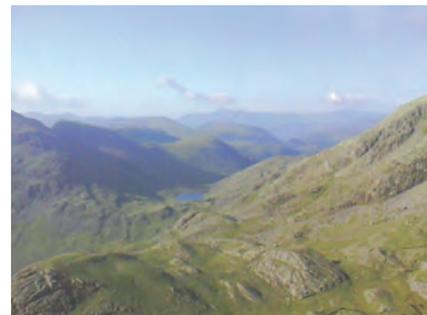
Graham support each weekend to years of experience with rescues and training.

Finally, I could mobilise the team with a plan. The gazelles of the team set off with advance first aid and oxygen whilst the rest of us carried the usual stretcher, casualty bag and crag evacuation gear. Due to the nature of this incident I requested a Sea King helicopter to assist in the evacuation.

As we all slogged up the hill, our base operator was receiving various calls from the casualty who was now very agitated saying he could see five people with orange jackets, this was rather confusing at the time as we were not in view of Broad Crag.

Various options were discussed, however plan A was the plan we were following as it cannot have been us they could see. As I approached Stand Crag I remember being rather sick due to the heat and lack of breeze, when Rescue 131 contacted me to say they would be on scene in five minutes. One of the 'gazelles' (they know who they are) managed to get to the casualty as 131 lowered the winchman. At this point, with the winchman and a team member on scene, casualty care administered and 131 stating they could winch from the scene, the rest of the team were held at Round How, ready in case of a change of plan but also for a well deserved cool off in the beck, taking in the stunning views during the evening sunset.

Once the casualty was winched from the crag, and safely on board and inbound to West Cumberland Hospital, the team was stood down. Once we were all off the fell it was off to a well earned beer debrief in the Wasdale Head Inn. A busy afternoon and evening for the team in very warm conditions. It's at times like this the strength of the team comes into play. An excellent team response, not forgetting the efforts of our base controller (we managed to bring him back a bottle).



COULD YOU IDENTIFY THE CASUALTY LOCATION?

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/03/2011. It is grouped by region and shows the date (day/month) the incident began. It is not comprehensive as many incidents have yet to be reported.

Lake District

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

Mid-Pennine

Bolton	01/01, 27/01, 09/02, 17/02, 28/02, 26/03
Bowland Pennine	27/01, 12/03, 19/03, 24/03, 27/03, 29/03
Calder Valley	17/02
Rossendale & Pendle	03/03, 04/03, 19/02, 12/03, 21/03, 27/03, 28/03

North East

Cleveland	09/01, 18/01, 06/03, 12/03
Northumberland Nat Park	05/03
Swaledale	05/01, 02/02, 13/02, 03/03, 03/03

North Wales

Aberglaslyn	19/01, 19/02
Llanberis	09/01, 30/01, 12/02, 17/02, 12/03, 19/03, 26/03, 26/03 06/03, 08/03, 12/03
North East Wales	11/01, 24/01, 28/01, 03/02, 13/02, 15/02, 08/03
Ogwen Valley	01/01, 02/01, 08/01, 08/01, 09/01, 15/01, 15/01, 22/01 19/01, 24/01, 27/01, 29/01, 05/02, 12/02, 13/02, 19/02 22/02, 19/03, 24/03
OB Wales	03/01, 18/02

Snowdonia National Park	02/01
South Snowdonia	21/01, 22/01, 29/01

Peak District

Buxton	16/01, 05/03, 23/01, 07/02, 21/02, 27/02, 03/03, 22/03
Derby	01/01, 17/02, 25/02, 11/03, 13/03, 18/03, 18/03
Edale	05/03, 03/01, 23/01, 05/02, 08/02, 07/02, 18/02, 21/02 27/02, 27/02, 03/03, 06/03, 07/03, 17/02, 20/03, 22/03 27/03, 21/02
Glossop	02/01, 05/02, 17/02, 21/02
Kinder	02/01, 16/01, 12/02, 16/02, 03/03, 05/03, 27/03
Oldham	07/01, 09/01, 13/02, 03/03, 11/03, 17/02
Woodhead	26/02, 21/02

Peninsula

Dartmoor (Okehampton)	25/01
Exmoor	02/01, 19/01, 25/01, 25/03

South Wales

Brecon	13/01, 15/01, 19/01, 23/01, 24/01, 25/01, 06/02, 16/02 24/02, 24/02, 03/03, 05/03, 12/03, 12/03, 26/03, 26/03
Central Beacons	13/01, 19/01, 23/01, 24/01, 06/02, 16/02, 28/02, 03/03 05/03, 12/03, 12/03, 26/03, 26/03
Longtown	06/02, 03/03, 12/03, 26/03
Western Beacons	19/01, 23/01, 24/01, 06/02, 16/02, 03/03, 05/03, 12/03 12/03, 28/02

Yorkshire Dales

CRO	22/01, 21/02, 23/02, 21/03, 26/03, 27/01, 27/03
Upper Wharfedale	15/01, 30/01

SARDA

England	15/01, 24/01, 25/01, 16/02, 17/02, 21/02, 05/03, 21/03
Lakes	21/02, 26/02, 08/03, 23/03
Wales	11/01, 22/02, 26/03, 26/03
South Wales	11/01, 06/02, 16/02, 28/02, 03/03, 05/03

Non-specialists

	29/01, 08/02, 22/02
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Monday 2 May: Just another day in mountain rescue... as Derby MRT attend no less than three incidents during Mountain and Cave Rescue Awareness Day

Whilst team members were doing a spot of fundraising at Dovedale, they received no less than three calls for help in rapid succession. The first was to an elderly male, reported to have collapsed close by, suffering from exhaustion. Team members were able to escort him back to the car park to be driven home by his wife. Shortly afterwards, a woman was reported to have collapsed at Lover's Leap. Also exhausted and dehydrated, she was treated, stretchered down to the Land Rover and driven back to the car park, without the need for further treatment.

Call three was a ten-year-old boy with an ankle injury, sustained scrambling over rocks at the base of Thorpe Cloud. He was evacuated by stretcher down the rocks and across the river to an EMAS ambulance.

Press officer, Kevin Corcoran, said, 'One of the aims of the day was to educate the public in the work of mountain rescue and we certainly achieved that objective, albeit not as we'd intended.'

May and early June also saw Derby called to two separate 'fallen climber' incidents at rocks adjacent to the river at Matlock Bath. The first was to 29-year-old man who had fallen approx 20 foot whilst climbing a rock face at Pic Tor, a popular spot by the River Derwent, sustaining a broken wrist and pelvis. Twenty three team members attended, along with the air ambulance, EMAS crews and Derbyshire Police. The ambulance crews provided initial treatment before team members evacuated the man to the waiting helicopter.

The second incident was to Wild Cats Crag, near Matlock Bath where a 48-year-old man from Youlgrave had fallen some distance – still attached to his rope – onto a ledge, when a large rock came loose. He had sustained head and arm injuries. A party climbing on rocks next to him, which included a physiotherapist, went to his aide and called the emergency services. They managed to lower him to the ground before



emergency crews arrived on scene. A fire service Rope Rescue unit, as well as EMAS paramedics were first on scene, followed by twenty members of the team, police, ambulance crews and other fire service tenders in a multi-agency rescue. The casualty was evacuated by stretcher from the rock face down to the riverside path, where a paramedic's vehicle had gained access and was used to evacuate the man to a waiting road ambulance.

Snippets from the Journals



David Allan

HARNESSES SUSPENSION

Harness suspension and first aid management: development of an evidence-based guideline.
A Adishes, C Lee, K Porter
Emerg Med J 2011, 28 265-268

This recent paper in the Emergency Medicine Journal has reviewed the evidence relating to this and produced a clearer understanding of the situation.

The paper is, to some extent, the outcome of a meeting in Buxton chaired by Professor Keith Porter. The meeting was partly driven by industrial concerns but climbing and caving were considered and MREW and BCRC were represented at the meeting. An extensive review of the literature has also been performed to include the evidence from all scientifically acceptable papers.

The term 'suspension trauma' arose following a medical IKAR meeting chaired by Professor Flora in Innsbruck in 1972. Gradually the term was changed to 'suspension syndrome' with the implication that a specific

clinical entity exists. A major part of this hypothesis was based on the idea of toxic material flowing from the lower limbs on release of the suspension. This has been shown to be entirely speculative with no clinical evidence to support it.

The effects of motionless suspension are in fact no different to the orthostatic syncope that may occur in a prolonged motionless standing position. The treatment therefore is to put the casualty into a horizontal position as early as possible exactly as for any other presentation of syncope (faint).

The principal risk, if loss of consciousness occurs, is to maintenance of the airway.

Suspension in a harness where free movement of the lower limbs is possible does not appear to carry a serious risk of orthostatic syncope. This of course will come as no surprise to those who were involved in the 'dangle and whack' period of climbing history or to those familiar with the harrowing account of the death of Toni Kurz.

No evidence has been found to support the idea of a distinct clinical syndrome. The term harness suspension is therefore preferred.

All recovered casualties with impaired consciousness should be placed in a horizontal position.



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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.

EMERGENCY SCOTLAND
2011 THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW



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In order to facilitate the requirements of these institutions we have built upon our enviable reputation within the UK for quality of product and service. We are the UK distributor for a number of international manufacturers and have been influential in bringing many innovative products to the UK. We would welcome the opportunity to explore how we can assist you within your environments.

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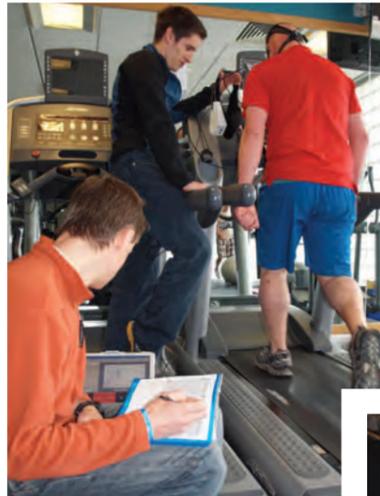
We lose it! You use it!



A study into rescuer fitness

John Ellerton

In this short presentation the results of a study into mountain rescuer fitness are outlined. The topic has been on the fringe for many years; this is the first attempt to quantify how hard mountain rescue is, and open a discussion on how concerned we should be with rescuer fitness. For full details of the study, please refer to the Emergency Medicine Journal where the study should be getting published during 2011.



TOP: EXERCISING TO EXHAUSTION ON THE TREADMILL MIDDLE: DETERMINING OXYGEN UPTAKE ABOVE: CARRYING THE STANDARD RUCKSACK LOAD: HALF A BELL STRETCHER

Why should we be concerned?

Firstly, from the casualty's perspective, time to hospital can be important in their medical outcome. Rescuer fitness is a small component of this. Its importance will depend on the type of rescue but compare an approach time of one hour for a fit rescuer with

1.5 hours for the unfit: a casualty in a hypothermia-inducing environment may be a few degrees colder by the time you arrive with the casualty bag and this difference could have serious consequences. We also know that if you are operating close to your maximum work capacity and then have to perform a skilled task, such as applying a splint or giving a drug, your performance is reduced. The fitter you are, the better you can do the task. (The army are good at this sort of research – enforced marches followed by shooting!)

The second broad area encompasses the welfare of the rescuer. It is well known that infrequent heavy physical exertion is associated with sudden death. Fitter persons have some protection. In the 'employed' world, such as the police and fire services, the employer has a duty to protect the health of the rescuer; work-specific fitness testing and reaching a minimum standard

partly addresses this liability. Though not strictly applicable to mountain rescue, we are a big family and need to look after our own. If you also factor in the disruption to an incident when a rescuer fails and our public image, you can see why we should be concerned.

So, should we define a minimum fitness standard for rescuers at the sharp end?

What is already known?

The short answer is 'very little!' There are plenty of opinions but few facts.

Which is the most strenuous part of rescue? Is it going up or carrying the casualty down? A show of hands at the AGM had a significant number for both activities. We don't know who is right.

What developments would make mountain rescue easier (apart from helicopters)? Is investing in lighter equipment or changing stretcher design more beneficial at overcoming bottlenecks? We have no data to prioritise our research.

This exploratory study was done with the aims of:

- Determining how fit a group of mountain rescuers were by measuring their VO_2^{max} – the gold standard for endurance fitness.
- Measure the work done during a simulated, but realistic, rescue and compare the workload with other emergency services.
- Investigate whether, in the future, we could use heart rate as a marker of work. (As you will see this will make subsequent studies much easier and cheaper to perform.)

The study could not have been done without help from Jamie H Macdonald PhD (Lecturer in Clinical Exercise Physiology and Outdoor Activities at the School of Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences, Bangor University) and Patterdale MRT; funding from Mountain Rescue England and Wales; and equipment from Penrith Leisure Centre and Polar watches. Let's consider our results...

Measuring rescuers' VO_2^{max}

Wearing a portable gas analyser, the rescuer exercised on a treadmill at increasing gradients until exhausted and to check that they really were, we then repeated the test! By looking at each breath we determined oxygen uptake and found that for the eight rescuers (age 46 ± 9 years) the mean VO_2^{max} was 52 ± 4 . This is well within the excellent category and comparable to much younger naval fire fighters; city ambulance men have been found to be considerably less fit (VO_2^{max} 37). So rescuers are fit, but do they need to be?

Measuring work during a simulated rescue

We designed a realistic rescue scenario that Patterdale team members would be expected to do at least once a year. For those familiar with the area, we chose Greenside to an incident hot spot above Red Tarn (approximately 3km and 430m ascent) and, though self-paced, the rescuers were encouraged to keep to times that had been logged for real rescues. They also carried a standard rucksack load – half a Bell stretcher! During the 30 minutes at the casualty site, rescuers prepared the stretcher with casualty



TOP: CARRYING MIDDLE: SLEDGING ABOVE: MANHANDLING

(70kg water), vacuum mattress and Entonox® apparatus before commencing the descent using a variety of different methods – sledging, carrying and manhandling.

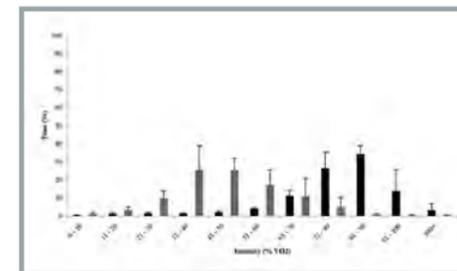
The results were striking. Ascent was much more strenuous than descent as shown in the graph where the black columns represent ascent and the grey columns descent. In terms of heart rate (HR), it was greater than 154 per minute for 80% of the time during ascent compared with only 6% during descent. The typical rescue load was 17% of body mass; this increases the work significantly. No other group of rescue workers have been shown to work for as long as ourselves – the maximum for fire fighters was 25 minutes whilst we worked for 114 minutes!

Can heart rate be used as a marker of work?

The simple answer is 'yes!' This means that, instead of being kitted out in fragile, expensive gas analysers, we can use watches with a heart rate monitor. So we can measure work during real call-outs, carrying different kit, different loads, and in different weather and type of call-out. The options are limited by your imagination.

We have learnt a lot about mountain rescue from this study. We do work extremely hard and for long periods but we also appear to be

self-selecting in having the required fitness to safely do what is required. Should we define a minimum standard of fitness? I suspect that no reasonable standard will be physiologically meaningful and it is better to rely on self-



selection. This works when we attract the right rescuers who are based in mountaineering and know what it is like to carry a big pack up a hill. The problem comes when the rescuer joins for other reasons – the free gifts, the blue lights and the sexy image? (Editor: Dream on.) Then we may expose unsuitable persons to a workload that is dangerous for them. In the end a minimum standard will be a political decision rather than a medical one and, as I said at the AGM, I am a technical officer not a politician. Which lets me off the hook!

John Ellerton is Medical Officer for Patterdale MRT and MREW, and Vice President of ICAR Medcom.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES MEDICAL SEMINAR

SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER
CHARLOTTE MASON COLLEGE

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)

12:15 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

Then depart unless you want to participate in the buffet at Langdale Ambleside MRT HQ (16:00–17:30).

Exercise Gwyniad Watermark in Wales

Al Read Ogwen Valley MRO



Flooding in Wales is as much an ongoing risk as it is for many other parts of the UK. In 1990 the sea defences on the North Wales coast were breached around Towyn, in 2004 the Conwy Valley experienced severe flood followed by a repeat a year later, on the same night that Carlisle was suffering. In early 2011, the Conwy Valley experienced yet more flooding but new flood defences proved their worth.

The Welsh Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG) established a working group in 2007 to develop an All Wales Water Rescue Strategy and the Welsh Government invested a significant sum of money in the fire and rescue services to provide a water rescue capability. Exercise Gwyniad was used as a key component of indicating successful delivery and it was tied into Exercise Watermark to meet the UK Government requirements of the Pitt Review.

The main exercise aim for Exercise Gwyniad was to practise the multi-agency inland water rescue capabilities and a number of exercise objectives were set. These included:

- Evaluating the all Wales flood response plan
- Testing communications
- Practise mobilising assets
- Promote interoperability in lines with the DEFRA Flood Rescue Concept of Operations document.

Along with the fire and rescue service, police, RAF SAR helicopters and mountain rescue

personnel, the RNLI and Ambulance Trust, North Wales Mountain Rescue Association (NWMRA) were also invited to attend and participated from part way through the planning stage to the debrief process. The main exercise objectives for NWMRA included:

- Deploying a DEFRA type C team to a flooding incident
- Effective integration in to a major multi-agency incident
- Establish effective interagency communications.
- Practise the role of mountain rescue adviser at a major incident command.

In early December a small number of NWMRA team members supported a practice day for the main event, to test the individual exercises and gather film footage that could be used in case the main event date was cancelled for whatever reason. In sub-zero conditions, team members worked with personnel from the other emergency organisation and literally in the rivers. A significant number of

underslung load and another type C team forward deployed to Bala already in place at the start of the exercise. Two mountain rescue personnel were embedded in the Silver/Tactical Coordination Group and a team leader was established as the MR Bronze Commander in a team vehicle.

The exercise ran pretty much as planned, notwithstanding all the usual factors that crop up. At one point there were four helicopters in use, two RAF Sea King, the North Wales Police helicopter and the Air Ambulance. Personnel were being transferred by road, boat and air and participating in a range of different exercise activities such as swiftwater rescues on the river Tryweryn, helicopter winch exercises from the top of a flooded caravan in Llyn Tegid, water and bank-based searches around Bala and the southern end of Llyn Tegid, as well as a technical rope rescue exercise by NWMRA and RAF mountain rescue teams creating a high line system across the river to transport emergency service personnel after a bridge had been washed away.

Communication systems were tested for all the participants, command and control was stretched and challenged in a

▶ page 55



NEW WATER TRAINING RESOURCE LAUNCHED

Training resources for water rescue can now be found online including:

- Downloadable SMEAC team briefing sheets
- Mountain Rescue's Awareness Level PowerPoint presentation
- Bankside syllabus and trainer notes
- Useful links to relevant training videos.

More information will be continually uploaded including revised awareness presentations to ensure the material is kept fresh. If you have any water rescue information to upload and share please visit the site and follow the link.

water-rescue.co.uk

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BELLS - As useful for mountain rescue as for rescue from water

ADVERTISEMENT



When John Rinfret invented and launched his Balcan Emergency Life Line - BELL - in 1973, that allowed anyone to throw it to its full length of 40 metres, it was immediately recognised as a vast improvement on the limited reach of traditional lifesaving equipment then available. This usually comprised of heavy lifebuoys which could weigh 9lbs and thick heavy ropes which needed to be coiled before being heaved by well trained users - usually dockers and sailors.

Whilst the potential distance the BELL could be thrown could be easily demonstrated, Rinfret realised that to give clients confidence to use it he needed to meet existing specifications for such a line. However, upon approaching the Marine Branch of the DoT in London he was told a specification did not exist and he should relate it to that used for the quoit and line fitted in internationally approved lifeboats and liferafts used in the shipping industry where it could be expected to be used in emergencies in the most arduous of conditions at sea. Rinfret was obviously relieved his specifications exceeded those for the quoit and line, being 10lbs stronger and 32ft longer!

As the potential for the widespread application of BELLS increased, Rinfret did all he could to gain further approvals for his simple device from recognised authorities. Dunlop's report of April 1975 confirmed the BELL could be thrown from lifeboats and liferafts with repeated accuracy much further than their own quoit and line. RFD reported in May 1974 that a BELL had been packed in a liferaft and dropped from 60ft and 120ft without incurring damage. They also placed it in a cold chamber at -30°C for 24 hours, after which it was thrown and the line paid out satisfactorily.

In 1975 the MOD had assessed BELLS for their own specialist uses and wrote confirming they had found BELLS fully met our claims for range and accuracy. As a result, they were used in the Falklands conflict. More recently, in 2000, after the Royal Navy had lost its Crown Immunity status, they assessed BELLS SUPERIOR to all other lifesaving devices and allocated NATO Stock Numbers (NSNs) to all three models because of ease of use and the most accurate long reach to the full length of the line of 40 metres. As a result BELLS are in extensive use throughout the armed services.

More recently Balcan has been advised by Alfie Ingram who, as the retired leader of Tayside Mountain Rescue Team, has written to say his practical experience of the BELL is that, apart from its obvious use for water rescues, it has proved ideal for acting as a messenger line to throw across gorges to allow a heavier, stronger rope to be hauled over.

The RAF mountain rescue team at Lossiemouth has found the same thing!

It will therefore be understood why Rinfret was recently appalled to read of a drowning in a frozen lake in Northamptonshire where a man had gone onto the ice to attempt to rescue his friend and had fallen in. The fire and rescue team who had attempted his rescue only carried a 20 metre long throw-bag which was too short to reach him and instead had to watch him drown, although he was only 30 metres away!

The team manager told the Coroner he had been advised by their national safety consultants against the use of BELLS and should use instead throw-bags with their excessively strong but short ropes. He claimed that most other rescue teams in the UK had fitted out in this way, so their radius of rescue had been reduced from a potential of 40 metres when the BELL was used, to less than 20 metres when throw-bags are carried. Rinfret believes more drownings will occur as a result due to victims being unable to be reached than if BELLS had been available.



This aspect has raised a very interesting legal issue for which Balcan sought Counsel's opinion when a drowning occurs out of reach of the lifesaving equipment provided. The opinion stated that if the circumstances of a drowning could have been foreseen to show that if more appropriate equipment had been readily available on the market with say a longer or more accurate reach, then a liability could be established. Rinfret believes the recently introduced Corporate Manslaughter Act agrees with this so there will be a much higher proportion of successful prosecutions because there will not be any logical defence against the use of such short lines. The tragedy in the frozen lake illustrates how,

whatever the strength of the rescue rope may be, if it is not long enough to reach the victim he will die. This is of particular concern because it is recognised that throw-bags, with their excessive strength, were designed and promoted for use in swift water rescue where rivers flow between comparatively narrow banks as opposed to open water conditions such as canals, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and the sea where emergencies can occur at much greater distances from safety. As a result it will not be difficult for prosecutors to claim that quite obviously inappropriate lifesaving equipment had been used.



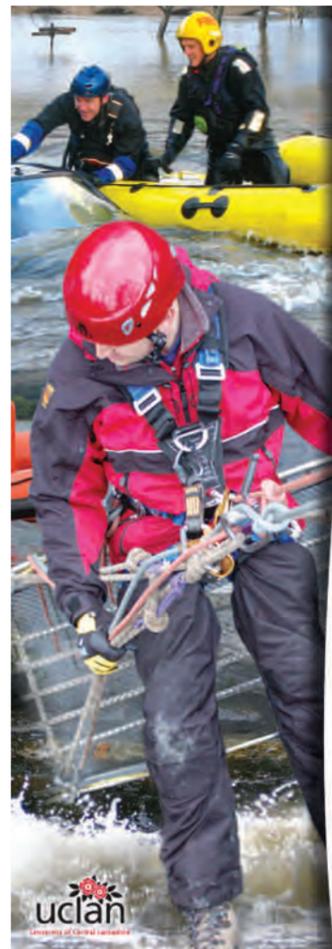
BELLS - THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

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Safequip announces their move to larger premises

Due to the continued successful growth over recent years, Safequip are pleased to announce they have moved to new purpose-built premises on the outskirts of Stirling, Scotland. Our recent expansion has also resulted in two new appointments to our sales division.

Mike Nott has joined the company as Business Development Manager and Jean Miller in the role of Sales Support, allowing us to significantly strengthen our representation in the marketplace whilst enhance our ability to respond more effectively and efficiently to our clients.

Recent years have seen an increased demand for water rescue equipment due to significantly increased flooding both in the UK and elsewhere. Our huge development programme has enabled us to become one of the leading suppliers to fire and rescue services, mountain rescue teams and other organisations who choose Safequip as their single source supplier for this type of rescue equipment. As a manufacturer, our focus is to continually develop and introduce new and innovative products into the professional rescue sector. We work closely with various services using product trials to help formulate new ideas for improving and developing new equipment to meet the ever increasing demands that are being made on our rescue services both home and abroad.

Our design team has a wealth of technical ability and experience to ensure ideas and innovations become a reality and we have the capability to develop bespoke designs which can be created and manufactured to meet specific customer requirements. Our product portfolio includes drysuits, undersuits, lifejackets, personal flotation devices, kit bags, gloves and various other water rescue aids. As well as supplying a range of our own branded products, we are the UK importers for Streamlight lighting, Volkl footwear, Eska gloves, and Ergodyne products. For further information please visit our website **www.safequip.co.uk**.



AN UNUSUAL REQUEST...

Grant Whiteside

Whilst visiting our colleagues at Bergwacht Blautal, a small mountain rescue team in southern Germany, they received an unusual request from the Red Cross in the nearby city of Ulm: to gather a small team to provide safety and medical cover on 4 June, for the city's first Münster Turmlauf, an open to all evening race up the historic Münster tower.



LEFT: ULM MINSTER IN DAYS GONE BY, WITH THE GALLERIES CLEARLY VISIBLE
PHOTO: REINHOLD MAYER POSTCARDS/ULMER MÜNSTER

RIGHT: ...AND TOWERING ABOVE THE MODERN CITY OF TODAY
PHOTO: GRANT WHITESIDE

Ulm Minster is huge, dating back to 1377, and boasts the world's tallest church steeple at 161.53m, which was completed in 1890. Visitors can ascend the 768 narrow (approx. 0.75m wide) spiral stairs right up to the Third Gallery at 143m which, on a clear day, gives fantastic views of the surrounding area, and as far as the Alps. In less than perfect weather, the wind swirls menacingly through the open galleries and exposed stairways

in a way that can unnerve even the surefooted.

The race was to be a timed ascent of the south-west stairway to the second gallery; an ascent of 102m over 560 steps, with competitors starting at 30 second intervals. The final, even narrower, single spiral stairway leading to the tiny third gallery is too small to cope with the planned number (max 161) of competitors. All planned descents



TEAM MEMBERS SORT THE KIT AS THE ONLOOKERS START TO GATHER
PHOTO: GRANT WHITESIDE

were to be via the north-west stairway.

Race day arrived and the unsettled weather cleared and the wind dropped to give hot and humid conditions that would persist into the evening, but may precipitate localised thunderstorms.

The team for the event, consisting of Ralf, Bergwacht Blautal's team leader; deputy team leader Markus; Timo and Michael, two experienced team members, and Sigi (my wife) and me, assembled outside the impressive main doors at the foot of the tower an hour before the scheduled race start time.

There were to be two team members at the start, two at the first gallery (70m) and two at the finish. Decisions were made as to what equipment was to be deployed with team members and what was to be left with the team vehicle to be deployed if needed.

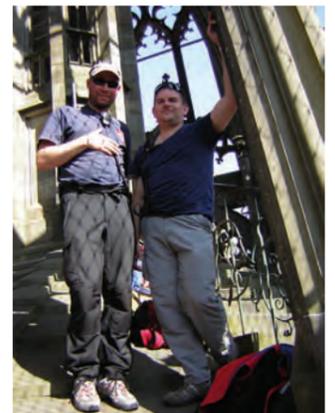
Shouldering our gear, Timo and I set off in the oppressive humidity to get to the finish line prior to the race start. Negotiating the narrow stairway with rescue packs, box splints, defibrillator etc is no mean feat in itself, but the additional challenge of squeezing past the rather bemused remnants of the afternoon's stream of visitors resulted in us arriving at the second gallery with burning thighs, soaked but laughing to ourselves. Our ascent time was never going to challenge the competitors but gave us a sense of achievement, as well as a sense of foreboding should any injury result in a non-ambulatory patient. Any evacuation from the tower would be a significant undertaking and thankfully the local fire service rope rescue unit was on standby to assist if required.

Having had just about enough time to catch our breath, gather our thoughts and briefly take in the view, the radio crackled into life to announce the start of the race. It seemed we had barely acknowledged the radio call before the first competitor breathlessly entered the atrium of the second gallery. There

followed a steady stream of 58 perspiring participants of varying shapes, sizes and ages.

Thankfully the skills and equipment of the team members were not required, and all starters arrived safely at the finish line except for one, who made a dignified withdrawal at the first gallery. The fastest time of the day was an amazing three minutes 24 seconds. The youngest participant, at just seven years old, finished in six minutes 25 seconds, putting Timo and me to shame but, then again, we carried a few more years and kilograms of kit than him!

After a brief rest, some of the competitors took the final stairway to the top of the spire to take in the vista before returning to join the others for the more relaxed pace of the walk back down to the Minster Square. As the last competitors headed down, the Bergwacht team and event organisers gathered their kit for the final sweep to check the stairways for stragglers, arriving back at the start line just in time to grab a cold shandy,



TIMO AND MARKUS AT THE SECOND GALLERY PHOTO: GRANT WHITESIDE

courtesy of the event organisers, and join the gathered crowd for the prize giving which was conducted by a representative of the local radio station.

Job done, Sigi and I made our way to a nearby hotel with time to spare for a pre-arranged family meal. Is being early for a family event (even if it is in uniform and still carrying a rucksack) a first for mountain rescue?

Aircrash on Ingleborough

On Tuesday 21 March, a Cessna light aircraft from Blackpool on a night training exercise crashed into the side of Ingleborough. Search and rescue efforts were hampered by the foggy weather and the fact the location of the plane was unknown to the pilot, who had survived the crash and reported it via his mobile phone. As well as numerous emergency services personnel, 36 Cave Rescue Organisation members (including two search dogs) and twelve Kendal MRT members were involved in the search and subsequent rescue. It's fair to say the excellent working relationship between Kendal and CRO (established during several years of joint training and incidents) played a major part in bringing the incident to a successful conclusion. Here's the story from each of their viewpoints...

Kathryn Jackson Deputy Team Leader Kendal MRT

'I've got a corker for you,' says the police controller. I have time to wonder what it would take to make it my oddest shout yet before she tells me a light aircraft has crashed. I have another split second for my stomach to drop and the thought 'body recovery' before she tells me she has spoken to the pilot!

I begin the process of information gathering but, putting the telephone down, apart from knowing there are two very much alive occupants of the plane to find, I consider I may be some way off knowing where to start looking for them...

At base, with the team starting to assemble, I am speaking to the pilot who sounds remarkably calm. He tells me he is cold and bruised and thinks his passenger may have a broken nose and possibly a broken ankle and is also very cold. I reassure him we're doing all we can to locate them and ask what he can tell me about their position.

They'd set off from Blackpool,

heading towards Kirkby Lonsdale, but think they may have been off track. Ok... What can they see? It's dark and misty and they're on a hill!

So, with information putting our cas site somewhere in the north of England, the gang in the control room start following up as many means as possible of narrowing down the search and also contact CRO, Bowland Pennine MRT and SARDA. Naively at this point, I still presume there must be easy ways of finding a plane. The police are working on a mobile phone triangulation and, whilst this is not going to be terribly accurate given the masts in the area, it'll be better information than we have. We're talking to ARCC at Kinloss who have dispatched Sea Kings and pass on to us the ATC report of the last known radar position of the plane as 'south west of Settle' but no-one seems to know a time for this. Plane location beacons have not been triggered and it seems likely they don't have one. Kev, Kendal's radio officer and official gadget geek, sits at the second computer tinkering with means of

locating the mobile by internet and GPS. With all the high tech stuff going on we also get out a big map and look at likely big bits

Three counties...
three police forces... loads of
blue lights... and a load of confusion
TOM REDFERN

of land that might just get in the way of a small plane!

CRO have assembled and are planning to drive likely valleys to see what they can see and where the pilot might see them. At control rooms in Kendal, Clapham and Kinloss there are multiple heads being scratched, ideas and strategies put forward. As a relative rookie in Kendal control, I am learning to ignore the pressure of a briefing room full of team members next door all waiting to be tasked! We send two vehicles full of personnel to be at the ready at a forward position in Kirkby Lonsdale.

The 'phone ping comes back as between Settle and Austwick and we find a few possible areas of

high ground but are already suspicious of the accuracy as, unless the cloud is very low and very thick, the areas would be in

view of the lights of settlements and reasonably busy roads. However, it does at least give a focus to our perusals of the map and the ongoing helicopter search operations. With a number of team members still at base, I take the decision to send them home on the basis we may need fed, watered and rested personnel later in an incident with the potential to run into the following day.

Cumbria police stand down and pass the baton to their North Yorkshire colleagues leaving CRO leading the incident for MR but the control room team at Kendal stay in place and the forward team at Kirkby Lonsdale are sent to Clapham for a brew. This turns

into a long night out as the incident develops and they assist CRO on the hill.

Tom Redfern Duty Controller CRO

At 2120 CRO was contacted directly by Kendal MRT, requesting assistance in a search for a downed light aircraft. We were asked to search Crag Hill and the area southeast of Bull Pot Farm, all within CRO's Cumbria operational area. To prove just how dynamic the situation was, three minutes later, Kendal requested we now concentrate from Leck Fell (Lancashire) eastwards to Masongill (North Yorkshire). This was due to a grid reference from a radar plot issued by Blackpool ATC. RAF helicopter Rescue 128 was now inbound from Leconfield to this location.

Our duty vehicle, CRO 1, and off-road ambulance and personnel carrier, CRO 3, departed Clapham along the A65 to Cowan Bridge. Our standby vehicle, CRO 2, followed a little while later as it was now evident the location was far from certain. From a quickly established forward base in Cowan Bridge car park, a search dog was deployed up to Leck Fell, followed by a team in CRO 3. A second CRO search team was deployed to the Bull Pot Farm road to overlook the Ease Gill area.

Three counties, three police forces, loads of blue lights, and a lot of confusion.

At this point North Yorkshire Police control room advised that their search was now being concentrated further east in the Settle, Rathmell and Austwick areas, following triangulation of the pilot's mobile phone signal. We took the decision to recall all the search teams off the hill and regroup back at the CRO base in

Clapham and await more concrete information.

At 2236 we took over the MR incident control, and invited the Kendal MRT personnel already deployed at Kirkby Lonsdale to come forward to Clapham for refreshments.

As all this was taking place Rescue 128 arrived and began a search of the Ingleborough area. Unfortunately, darkness and very dense low cloud covering the fell tops severely restricted the helicopter's search ability. The helicopter crew did however manage to make contact with the downed pilots by mobile phone and were told they could hear the helicopter in the vicinity. Using the 'is the sound of the helicopter getting louder or quieter?' technique, the Sea King crew were able to give a rough location for the crash site before having to abandon the search due to the marginal flying conditions.

At 2242 a CRO team and search dog were deployed onto Ingleborough above Crummackdale followed by a second CRO search team and dog to Gaping Gill. At this point Kendal MRT arrived in two vehicles, at what proved to be the start of an intensive night of successful joint working between the two teams.

A third CRO team was sent onto the southern slope of Ingleborough, swiftly followed by a Kendal team to search up from Crina Bottom. CRO's Bill Batson and Search Dog Glen take up the story...

Bill Batson SARDA and CRO

Myself and Glen, with a CRO navigator and two other team members, were deployed to the

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▶ page 51

area of Juniper Gulf pot hole, from where we began our search. We made our way up the main Ingleborough to Horton in Ribblesdale (Three Peaks) path, moving quickly and working Glen up the path and to the windward side. Shortly after commencing our search we entered very dense mist that reduced visibility to a few metres. From this point forward different to SARDA's normal training routine.

● We were moving very quickly up the path so we could stay ahead of the CRO personnel following, trying to avoid filling the area with 'non-casualty' scent.

● While I was working Glen, my navigator and the other members of the search teams began shouting loudly to try to attract the attention of the crashed pilots. The noise and distraction caused by this shouting was made worse by continuous radio chatter. This, without doubt, caused a distraction for Glen and affected his willingness to range, in that I believe he thought the shouting was happening because he was doing something wrong and kept returning to me for reassurance.

● After approximately 30 minutes, both the navigator and I heard an indistinct and distant shout that did not sound like those being made by the search teams. Having requested that searchers stop shouting and maintain radio silence, we gave additional shouts while I pushed Glen in the approximate direction of the initial

noise. After some five minutes, Glen took off into the mist, clearly on a mission and, as we followed him up, the shouts became clearer. Glen returned to me and took us back to the crash site, some 200 metres from the point where he had first picked up the scent. On arrival at the crash site we discovered an extremely badly damaged aircraft with both casualties still inside the wreckage.

● Both casualties were conscious, but injured with suspected fractured ankles (both pilots) and facial injuries (student pilot). There was a strong smell of Avgas (aviation gasoline) and many pieces of wreckage and plexiglass were in the immediate vicinity which provided an extreme danger to the rescue party and Glen.

Search Dog Glen made his find at 0015hrs. All search teams were then redeployed to the crash site from their various locations around Ingleborough. Due to the very poor visibility a human chain of lights was improvised to guide the rescue teams through the final 500m of difficult ground to the location.

Eventually two team doctors and further medical equipment arrived and, a short time later, two stretcher parties commenced the 2km evacuation over rough terrain to Trow Gill. From there a fleet of team Land Rovers brought the casualties and team members down to Clapham and the waiting road ambulances. All personnel were off the hill by 0500hrs.

The noise and distraction caused by the shouting... made worse by continuous radio chatter without doubt affected Glen's willingness to range...

BILL BATSON

CORNER Poem



THE SHOUT... A MOUNTAIN RESCUE CALL OUT BY PETE ROE

© Pete Roe 2009

Someone's lost
Lost out there
Out there somewhere
But where? Where?
And should I care?
Who are they?
I don't know...
Just need to go...
And search until
they're found...
...Or not...
And then go home
For that's the way it is
...When someone's
lost...

A call will come
And for a moment
In the early hours
Conscious thoughts
will wrestle
Through the treacle
mire of deep, deep
sleep
Which tries to drag me
back to
Warm soft oblivion.

I could ignore the call
Tell myself I have not
heard
But, by now
I've picked my
eyeballs from the
carpet
Blinking out the dust
and grit
Waking to a new
reality

A reality of...
Boots and maps
And over trousers

Of coffee flask and
food
To starve the cold
Of battery lamps
To see me through the
night
To see what might be
found

Then out driving
Lone dark moor roads
A comfort in this time.
A time to still the mind
To gather thoughts
together
To sort out what
'errors'
Have brought me to
this place tonight.

A place now filled
With 'blue light' bustle
With cheery friends
and greetings
Soon dispatched to
seek through darkness
To find what ever
might remain
Alive or dead
Unfortunate or foolish
It's not for me to judge
It's not for me to
blame.

You take the call
You walk the road
You find whatever
Is yours to find
And what ever there
is good...
Take home
And what ever else...
Leave behind.



ALPINE WEATHER

Geoff Monk www.mwis.org.uk

An International Conference on Alpine Meteorology is held every two years and, for the first time, in May, will have been held in Scotland, at Aviemore. Its aim is to encourage research and promote interest in mountain meteorology, with sessions relevant to anyone concerned with research or operational weather forecasting for mountainous regions.

Of course, the weather on the British mountains is only occasionally alpine in character, such as during extended periods when air comes off the Continent, and rarely when inversions – warm very clear air fairly high up in the atmosphere, descends to a level below the higher mountain summits.

Most of the year, British weather can be described as 'maritime', with the air at mountain level influenced heavily by passage over the seas surrounding Britain. This shows itself most dramatically in long seasons where generally southwesterly winds bring in bands of steady rainfall, interspersed by showery conditions. Typically, rainfall rates (not necessarily the number of hours of rain), increase dramatically on western mountains, and decrease to give a 'rain shadow' in the east. An important by-product of the moisture coming in off the sea is the amount of low cloud. For example during the 25 years of the Ben Nevis observatory in late Victorian times, the summit was cloud free on

average less than one sixth of the year. Low cloud occurs relatively rarely in areas remote from the sea – except in mid-winter when frequently the higher mountains are cloudless, above low cloud (or fog) in the valleys and on lower slopes.

There are periods when precipitation can be enormous in Alpine regions. These are usually in the winter season, when for several days, persistent either northerly or southerly winds can give constant heavy precipitation on the windward side of the mountains. Indeed, a feature of Central European and Mediterranean weather is that systems tend to move more slowly than they do near Britain, often resulting in several days of poor weather at a time. Particularly on the southern Alps, winter snow cover is dependent on very few such events.

Showers on the British mountains are most frequent in the winter, whilst in Alpine regions, it is the summer when typically in the afternoons, heavy showers – or more likely thunderstorms –

build up quickly, bringing rapid deterioration in the weather. The mechanics of thunderstorm development can be quite complicated over the Alps. Generally, air heating up quickly on higher bare rock generates thermals, some of which become organised into larger scale areas of rising air – which leads to the rapid development of cloud and thunder. However, during some summers, lightning can occur throughout the 24 hours, this curiously due in part to areas of dry relatively cold air running in off the Atlantic high up in the atmosphere. As this moves above the strongly heated continental air, and is forced to rise over the Alps, there can be 'waves' of thundery weather, giving substantial rainfall – sometimes almost daily for a week or two.

Snowfall often has a different character in the Alps. In summer, precipitation on highest Alpine summits will often be as hail rather than snow, but otherwise snowfall is predominantly powdery across the Alps. Broadly, as a result, avalanches tend to occur due to the weight of large areas of snow. However, in Britain, snow often occurs mixed with hail in localised showers, resulting in layers of powder snow, interspersed by layers of hail. This results on a very local scale in variations in the snow/hail pack that can lead to numerous, but mostly small scale avalanches.

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DMM UPDATE

With the summer shows looming, we have continued to work hard on finalising new products and ranges ready for release. It is very relevant to note that we have had a number of products developed over the past year which have been aimed more at an Industrial/Arborist market, but which could be very relevant to rescue applications too.

Pinto pullies are flying out the door as their versatility is being recognised by various organisations, as have the triple attachment pullies, and most recently the impact blocks and rigging plates. For full details of these products please visit our website dmmwales.com and look through the Professional Products section. If you would like a catalogue of Professional or Arborist products please contact either Lesley or Louisavia email: lesleysage@dmmwales.com or louisa@dmmwales.com.

Also for your information we now have our first Dynamic ropes available in the warehouse. These include half ropes, and a selection of full ropes, and by the time the shows arrive we will have accessory cord and gym rope too.

All in all a very relevant package of new products which we hope will be of interest to you. As always please feel free to contact us in the sales department for any advice or information you might require.

DMM
CLIMB NOW WORK LATER

number of different areas and interoperability between different responders was put to the test.

Overall the day was considered a success by all who participated but a large number of lessons were identified.

From a mountain rescue perspective, NWMRA achieved all its objectives with two type C teams being made available the whole exercise. The helicopter deployment for one type C team worked well, with all the kit for the underslung load being identified and weighed ahead of the event although it was packed on the day and the team flown in – even if they did arrive a bit late.

Airwave communications worked well for mountain rescue, the RNLI and the RAF with good comms being established over most of the area. A few black spots were found, but with VHF comms being used as well it was felt we had established good communications with the other responders we are most likely to work with. An area for improvement would be to have greater communications capacity with the other responders and set up a deployable MRMap system (we had limited success with this on the day) to improve general situational awareness of where teams members are.

The nature of the exercise meant NWMRA had only limited interaction with fire and rescue service responders and this should be addressed in any future exercises – the capabilities are there, it's gaining the understanding of how everyone works together

ahead of being required in anger that is important.

The integration of mountain rescue advisers at Tactical level worked well with a positive contribution being noted by a number of other agencies. At the Bronze/Operational command level it was far more difficult to integrate and this should be exercised further to break down any barriers. NWMRA also learnt that establishing a support system is essential to ensure good team welfare when not actively being used.

SARMAN was used to help with the geography of the incident and was essential on a number of occasions when people became geographically challenged by not having the right 1:25K map!

A significant number of lessons have also been identified in developing major exercise.

Without the effort put in by a large number of people it would not have been as successful as it was on the day. Team members made a significant impact to a range of visiting VIPs as well as other participants and thanks is due everyone who attended and support the exercise, from it planning phase to the debrief.

Notes:

A DEFRA Type C team is a minimum of seven personnel with six qualified to water rescue technician level and have to capability to work in the water in a technical environment.

Author: Al Read is Team Leader Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation, NWMRA Training Officer, DEFRA Flood Rescue Adviser and Senior Instructor at Outreach Rescue.

Cave Rescue Conference



Pete Allwright supported by Emma Porter



The 12th UIS1 International Cave Rescue Conference was held from 8-12 May in Dryanovo, Bulgaria. This small town is situated some 130 miles east of Sofia and takes some three hours to drive there. Due to inconvenient flights, some of the British contingent – Pete Allwright from BCRC and Roy Holmes (CRO member) arrived at Sofia at 10.00pm local time and so arrived in the early hours of Sunday. Other UK representatives were already present – Emma Porter, Deanne Wilkins (both Midland CRO) and Steve Tomalin (Gloucestershire CRG).

The conference was held in the environs of the Dryanovo Monastery, about three miles out of the town itself. Various accommodation was available – it was typical of the British cavers to choose the cheapest available, which proved to be basic. Very basic indeed. The talks were presented in the hotel a further half mile from the accommodation whilst the Monastery itself was a quarter of a mile in the opposite direction.

The whole conference site was located in a deeply incised valley with limestone cliffs on either side and caves nearby. The weather proved variable to say the least. A northerly wind kept the temperature well down so the baking hot weather we expected did not materialise at the conference.

Sunday proved to be a non-event as the remainder of the delegates arrived during the day. We took the opportunity to get

some walking in and explore the surroundings.

Monday finally saw the formal opening of the conference. This was preceded by a short UIS meeting which covered monitoring EU activity and the impact on cave rescue and trying to get international cave rescue statistics together.

The first talk covered cave rescue in Bulgaria presented by Nina Daalieva.

Cave rescue started here informally in 1958 with the first fatal accident occurring in 1965. A formal rescue structure was created in 1967 and the first formal cave rescue training courses were organised in 1973. Some 270 cavers have passed through similar courses over the years. There are presently some 100 cave rescue personnel. Good relations are maintained with mountain rescue, civil protection and other authorities. They do get some financial

assistance from the authorities; there a small number of rescues each year.

This was followed by Christian Dodelin of Speleo Secours Français (French Cave Rescue) describing a rescue in Gouffre de la Piste de l'Agile.

See <http://tinyurl.com/6xcsn4o> (in French). A caver suffered a knee injury some 200 metres down, and the other side, of a very awkward section of cave. Explosives were considered to enlarge this section but were not used in the end. It took some time to get a doctor to the scene and, with suitable analgesia, the knee dislocation was reduced on site. With much assistance, the caver was then able to make his own way out of the cave. The accident occurred at about 1.00pm with the rescue call-out being at 3.00pm. The doctor was on scene with the casualty at 11.00pm. The casualty made the

surface at 5.00am the next morning.

This was followed by Olivier Lanet of Speleo Secours Français on the diving rescue from La Dragonniere de Gaud.

As reported in the Mountain Rescue, January 2011, page 28). A cave diver was missing on a long deep cave dive involving much decompression. Divers from the UK, Italy and Switzerland gave assistance. This report covered the rescue from the French viewpoint and concurred with the written article. Olivier reported on the many extra cylinders needed for the lengthy decompression stops, and how support divers went in during these periods to retrieve information regarding what had been found.

At one point the British divers reported spending some two and a half hours trying to get through the blockage. They had started to drill down from the surface in order to try and clear the blockage but this was abandoned when the body of the missing diver was found. Due to the dangerous dive it was decided not to recover the body.

Alessio Fabbriatore of Corpo Nazionale Soccorso Alpino e Speleologico (Italian Mountain and Cave Rescue) presented a summary of services in Italy.

They have some 7000 volunteers in mountain and cave rescue. The cave rescue is arranged through 32 cave rescue stations (compared to some 235 for mountain rescue). He covered cave rescue diving, reporting that the Italians have rebreather capability necessary for deep sump diving. He gave some details of a portable hyperbaric chamber available if necessary. This is of a very portable design and can be transported by helicopter to the scene if required. Alessio outlined the diving cave rescue manual available in Italian and told the meeting they were hoping to get an English translation on the web soon: www.soccorsosepeleo.it (the author has looked but cannot locate said manual, maybe an Italian speaker will have better luck).

Croatian cave rescue was explained by Ivica Cukusic. The service here follows a similar pattern to that in Italy. Croatia has

increasing caving activity and the rescue count is slowly increasing. There are some 700 volunteers in the service along with eleven professional members. There are now some very deep caves being explored and some deep sumps. There are some six cave rescue divers; they are allowed to dive to –200 metres whereas police divers are limited to –60 metres. Thus Croatian cave divers are being called to assist the police on occasions. Ivica then went on to examine how international rescue cooperation operates and concluded with the suggestion that European cave divers need to build up a greater cooperation.

This theme of cooperation was continued by Gula Hegedus of Hungary, who described the Balkan cave rescue coverage.

At present, Hungary, Slovakia and Czechoslovakia are working together and it is hoped Romania will be brought in soon. This was started informally some ten years ago but now had a formal agreement in place. To reach this they had to overcome the various legal backgrounds in the different countries, for example that the Slovakian cave rescue is an arm of the professional rescue services. To overcome language differences, English and German have been adopted. The future plans include adding other countries (eg. Romania and Serbia), and having more joint practices.

The fledgling cave rescue service in the Russian Federation was described by Amina Chanysheva*.

*Ог Амина Чанышева, if you want to be precise!

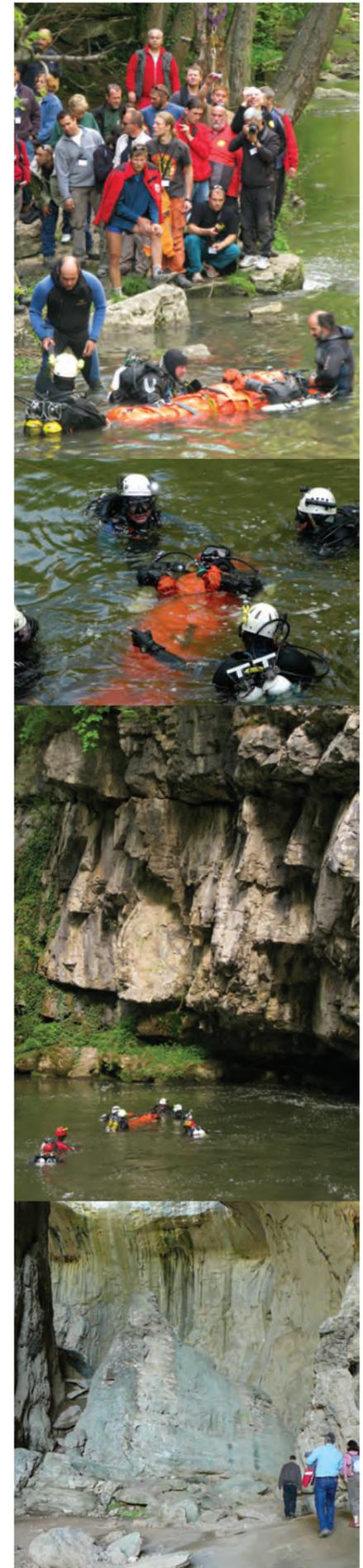
In 2004, together with cavers from the Ukraine, they have been undergoing training provided by the Speleo Secours Français (SSF). The SSF offers an intense cave rescue course lasting in the order of a week and this has been taken up by a number of countries worldwide. Further similar training courses were organised in 2006 and 2008. In 2009 they organised a course on their own. Amina explained there are club and individual groups but no national organisation so far. There is a regional organisation in the Urals. They are taking steps towards a national federation.

Atanas Rusev described the rescue operation at the Duhiata Cave, Bulgaria.

This occurred between 4-5 December 2010. The cave is located some 35 km from Sofia and is an 18km long cave complex with eight river passages and eight entrances. Some seven cavers – four experienced together with two teenage girls and a boy, aged eleven, entered the cave in early evening. Being winter, flooding was not expected. After three or four hours in the cave the party were returning up the lower stream when the water levels rose dangerously – due to heavy rain on the surface. They continued up river but this became impassable and they were thus forced to climb into higher passage to avoid being washed away.

The party had left a note in the local village and when this was seen the next morning the alarm was raised. Their car was located, indicating they were still in the cave. The initial investigation showed the water levels to be too high for rescue parties to get far into the cave. It was soon decided the resurgence (where the water leaves the cave at the bottom) would have to be excavated in an attempt to lower the water levels in the cave. An excavator was commandeered from a road construction project nearby and the lower resurgence was dug, causing an increase in the water flow from the resurgence and some flooding in the local village! The water level in the cave was checked every two hours but was not observed to drop significantly. A second larger digger was added to the effort and tackled the upper resurgence. This caused a sudden flood following which water levels in the cave were observed to be dropping quickly.

This enabled the rescue party to push into the cave and they found the missing party at 8:30pm in the evening in a poor condition, indeed the boy was severely exposed. They had climbed high in the passage to avoid the flood water reaching close to the roof with the water lapping at their feet! They could hear the sound of the digging operations.





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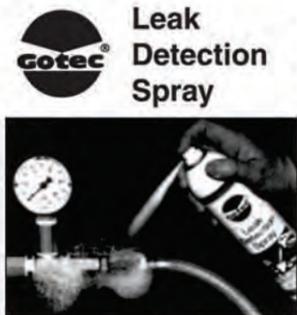
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Atanas concluded by showing graphs of the water levels and comparing these with a previous similar event. The conclusion was that without the digging, the cave would have flooded to the roof, drowning the cavers. This rescue was the top news item for the period and the Bulgarian Prime Minister was present at the conclusion of operations when the party surfaced.

There were also some presentations on equipment. These included a talk on single-wire communications (which have been used in the UK for many years) and on some specialised equipment. These included the Bulgarian cave rescue stretcher development and a petrol drill for use underground. But of particular note was a lifting aid – a lever device with two prussik devices configured so that as the lever is operated the weight of the stretcher switches between them. This looks like a very good idea. But, when asked what would happen if the stretcher became caught and

needed to be lowered, no clear response was given!

So what are the conclusions (apart from avoiding the Bulgarian Rakial)? Nice venue if a little basic and perhaps remote from the local town. The conference provided a breadth of information that the countries with emerging cave rescue organisations would find quite useful. The increasing cooperation between rescue teams, particularly in the Balkans, is very encouraging.

But, from my point of view, the conference struggled at times – the timetabling was weak in that lectures started late and frequently over-ran. Further, information and instructions were confused. This caused problems such as at the hauling demonstration on the Monday. Here the lectures finishing late together with the distance to the demonstration cliff meant quite a number of us did not arrive until near the end. (But it was interesting to see the young lady from the television walking up the rough terrain in high heels).

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