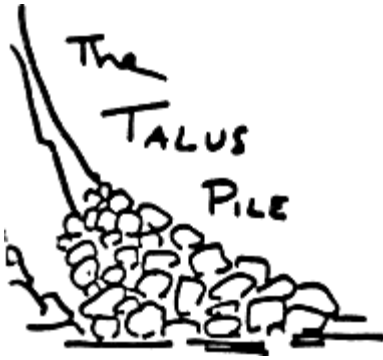


September 1986
#67



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP
P.O. BOX 2037
RIDGECREST, CA 93555

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 6	Matterhorn Peak	Derrickson
SEPTEMBER 8	Meeting	J. Westbrook
SEPTEMBER 13	Mt. Mendel	Green
SEPTEMBER 17	Case Studies	Training Committee
SEPTEMBER 20	Domelands	Mason
SEPTEMBER 27-28	Rock Skills	Hinman
OCTOBER 4	ELT Practice	Training Committee
OCTOBER 6	Meeting	Huey
OCTOBER 11-13	Yosemite Valley	Hine

“I shall pass through this world but once. Any good that I can do, or any kindness that I can show any human being, let me do it now and not defer it.

OPERATION REPORTS

86-11 5/30/86 Rescue Mt. Whitney Hine

Todd Erickson, Glen VanAken, Douglas Miyatake (each from Ridgecrest) and Wendy Borgud (Mammoth Lakes) started Whitney's East Face route just before noon on 29 June. They reached the summit as the sun was going down and the ice was starting to form. Using their portable HAM radio, they informed Lloyd Brubaker in Ridgecrest that they were going to spend the night in the summit hut.

At 0130 hours they contacted Lloyd again to report that the temperature was in the low 20's and Douglas was starting to hallucinate. The Inyo County Sheriffs department started making arrangements for a helicopter and then paged CLMRG at 0330. Thirteen members and Don Brubaker (HAM operator) left the rescue but by 0500.

Base camp was established at Lone Pine airport where Lt. Lutz from the sheriffs department informed me that a Navy helicopter from Lemoore would arrive around 0730. Two ground teams were dispatched up the Whitney Trail (the victims' indicated descent route) at 0640. Radio contact with the victims was established from base camp at 0709. They indicated that Doug was feeling better and, other than being tired, they could all probably walk out. I told them about the ground teams approaching their location and asked them to remain where they were until I found out the helicopter's status.

Because of the rising air temperatures the helicopter was only able to make one trip to pick up one person. The corpsman talked to the group on the summit and determined that Glen should ride but that the others could walk out on their own. By 1452 everyone was off the mountain and enjoying a hearty Bobo-Burger in Lone Pine.

CLMRG personnel involved were: Green, Hinman, Gleason, Mitchell, Amster, Seibold, McDowell, DeRuiter, Roberts, Roseman, Walker and coordinator S. Rockwell.

Comments:

It is a rare situation where base camp is able to talk directly with the victims before any rescue people reach them. This allowed us to determine the victims' condition early and control their movements throughout the operation.

86-12 7/4/86 Rescue Mt. Whitney Huey

On Wednesday, 3 July, Mike Meteyer and his partner were climbing the standard East Face route on Mt. Whitney. Meteyer fell 15 feet at the bottom of the "Grand Staircase" when a block he was standing on came loose. The block hit his partner on the left wrist, and Meteyer injured his ribs in the fall. Both continued to climb until Meteyer was no longer able, at the last step of the Staircase, some 500 feet below the summit. Their calls for help brought two climbers who had just completed the Keeler Needle ascent. The Keeler climbers made Meteyer as comfortable as possible with their combined clothing. However, they had no water. Meteyer was left alone for the night since no one had bivouac gear. His partner and one of the others hiked out that night and contacted the sheriff's office around 0600 hours Friday. Meteyer was reported to be in shock and weak.

CLMRG received the call at 0641 A team of 13 was on the road to Lone Pine by 0800. Base camp was set up at the airport, and helicopter support was provided by the Forest Service. The Park Service also had a smoker helo (for forest fire use) there, and Edwards Air Force Base had a crew on stand-by.

Hinman was flown to the top of Mt. Whitney in order to provide initial assistance and to establish radio contact with base camp. He was joined on the next flight by Green, Rockwell, and Gleason who brought in ropes, technical climbing gear, clothing, water and food. They descended to Meteyer

On first examination, Meteyer was weak and had an injury to his left rib cage. He was given food and water and his ribs were bandaged. While the advance team was assessing his condition for evacuation, additional teams were flown to the top with more gear including a stretcher. The wind conditions were such that continued helo assistance was in question. Therefore the last team carried food, stoves, clothing, and shelter for a possible overnight stay for Meteyer and CLMRG. In addition, other Southern California teams were placed on alert in the event of the need to manually transport the victim to the roadhead.

A half hour after being warmed, receiving first aid treatment, eating and drinking, Meteyer felt that, with considerable assistance, he could try the climb to the top. With Green and Hinman providing belays and Rockwell climbing closely with Meteyer, he was moved up the 5th class rock to fixed lines placed by other CLMRG members on the remaining 4th class route to the top. Meteyer was on the summit by 1300 and the helo was able to make one more flight to take him to the hospital. All CLMRG members hiked out.

Other CLMRG personnel included: Hine, Sakai, Mitchell, Atkins, Dan Harris, D. Burge, Ringrose and Buffum. Coordinators were Wyatt and S. Rockwell. Seven members of the Inyo Sheriff's Posse reported to base camp for additional assistance if needed.

Comment:

The Forest Service helicopter was invaluable. The expertise of the pilot and crew in this high wind environment functioned to make this a successful operation.

86-13 7/11-12/86 Rescue Mt. Whitney Atkins

Jim Melcher, age 12, and his group of Boy Scouts from El Cajon had left Trail Camp to climb to the summit of Mt. Whitney early Friday morning. On the way up he lost the trail because of snow and traversed southeast toward the ridge below Discovery Pinnacle. He then attempted to climb up the ridge believing the Whitney trail was above him. He ascended steep snow and ice into an area of difficult terrain and ledges, becoming stranded. Other climbers in the area heard Jim's calls for assistance. They relayed the information to the authorities.

At 1550 Friday my pager requested a response to the Inyo County Sheriff. Dan Lucas informed me of the situation and said that he was arranging for the Park Service helo. Using the pager I announced that members with ready packs should report to the rescue hut ASAP. Aigner called the rest of the roster. The advance team of Green, Hine and Huey left for the Lone Pine airport at 1625. A second team of Mitchell, Rogers and Dan Harris left at 1640. The remainder of us followed with the rescue gear and base camp equipment. We arrived at Lone Pine at 1945 and began immediately setting up for the operation.

When I arrived Green had already dispatched a team (Huey, Rogers and Harris) to interview climbers descending the trail and to gather further information. The best information at the time was that the last voice contact with the subject was midafternoon Friday, and that he was somewhere above Trail Camp. The Park Service helo crew said that they were able to put an advance team on the mountain before dark, and in two trips Hine and Green were transported to near Discovery Pinnacle by 2000 hours.

The situation was beginning to come into focus. One of the troop leaders realized Friday afternoon that Jim was missing. He descended, notified the Sheriff, and came to the airport. So by then we knew who we were looking for and had a good description.

Hine descended to a point 200' above Jim, and established voice contact with him. He seemed okay, but was frightened, cold, and hungry. In spite of the increasing darkness and severity of the terrain, Green reached Jim's position at 2115. Green tied Jim in and gave him food, water and some clothing to keep him warm. Hine belayed them both up 200' of steep snow and rock to a reasonable bivouac site, and they settled in for the night. By now Jim was doing fine. Meanwhile Huey, Rogers and Harris ascended to Trail Camp and bivouacked for the evening.

Green was on the air at 0523 Saturday morning, reporting that he and Hine were going to climb Jim up to the landing zone at Discovery Pinnacle for helo evacuation. Huey and Rogers ascended the switchbacks in the morning to the LZ. The Forest Service helo arrived at Lone Pine at 0917. Since the pilot was not familiar with the LZ, Mitchell flew with them. A short 25 minutes later Jim was reunited with his group at Lone Pine. He was in excellent shape, and a short time later the troop headed south. The helo made one more trip to bring Hine to Lone Pine. All members were off the mountain shortly after lunch.

Other CLMRG personnel assisting were: Hinman, Seibold, Ingle, McDowell, DeRuiter, Buffum and Roberts. Aigner was assisted by S. Harris and Braun for the call out.

Comments:

1. This call came late in the afternoon, giving us very limited flying time before darkness. Having ready packs in the hut was absolutely essential in getting our advance team underway and to the victim before dark. This saved most of us a long night of trudging up the trail!
2. The operation went well because of the excellent cooperation between the Park Service, Forest Service and the Sheriff's Office. Dan Lucas was working two operations simultaneously (See the next operation report).

86-14 7/12/86 Rescue Taboose Pass Atkins

While we were busy at Mt. Whitney, the June Lake and Inyo County teams were involved in a rescue of Val Stevens of Park City, Utah. Val had been hang gliding over Taboose Pass on Friday afternoon when his glider suddenly inverted. He found himself on top of his glider spiraling down like a leaf. He deployed his parachute, but it became entangled in his glider. He managed to right the craft just moments before crashing on the north side of Taboose Creek Canyon, but suffered possible broken ankles from the impact and his subsequent tumble down the scree.

An Inyo team of five headed by Pat Elliott had reached Val late Friday night, given him first aid, and had begun the long lowering (nearly 1500 feet) down loose talus and scree to the Taboose Pass trail. A June Lake team of four headed by Igor Vorobyoff was airlifted to an LZ above the crash site just before dark Friday night by the Forest Service Helo.

After we had concluded the previous operation, Lucas requested that we help complete the evacuation of Val. I had seven fresh and eager (?) CLMRG members anxious to get into the field. Early Saturday afternoon they were airlifted to the mouth of Taboose Pass Canyon, and quickly hiked up to meet the Inyo and June Lake teams which had spent an exhausting night getting Val down to the trail. Using their wheel and litter we assisted in bringing him down to a suitable LZ in the lower part of the canyon. At 1540 the Forest Service helo made the pickup and Val was on his way to Southern Inyo Hospital.

The tired crews were at the Taboose Creek campground base camp at 1600. After a dinner in Lone Pine courtesy of the sheriff, we arrived home at 2000 hours.

Other CLMRG personnel involved in this operation were Mitchell, Buffum, DeRuiter, Roberts, McDowell, Ingle and Seibold.

86-15 7/14/86 Search San Jacinto Hine

On 14 July CLMRG responded to a call from the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit (RMRU) to assist in a search for 19 year old David Vague. He had failed to return to his camp after a day hike on Saturday, 12 July. Backpackers interviewed on Sunday reported seeing someone matching David's description well beyond the campsite and heading towards Tahquitz Canyon. This canyon is the traditional route for lost hikers. They can see Palm Springs from there, especially at night. What appears to be a short distance to civilization turns into 3500 vertical feet of cliffs and waterfalls. Helicopter and trackers searched the canyon down to the 4000 foot level. No indication of anyone being in the canyon was found: therefore the search area was shifted back to the plateau between the canyon and the place last seen (PLS).

CLMRG's assignment was to start at Hidden Lake and sweep downslope (toward the PLS) to Tahquitz Creek. Then we were to search along the north bank of the creek toward Tahquitz Canyon. CARDA dog teams would be starting at the PLS and searching down the creek while we were moving down from the lake.

We were approaching the creek when word came by radio that David had been located. He had indeed gone down Tahquitz Canyon and had walked out to Palm Springs, one of a very few who had made it all the way. He reported waving at the helicopter several times but was never spotted. The combination of dark clothes (brown shirt, black pants) and the rugged terrain hid him from searching eyes.

CLMRG personnel involved were: Hine, Mitchell, McDowell, Ringrose, Hill, Roseman, S. Rockwell (coordinator) and S. Harris (telephoner).

Comments:

1. CLMRG was part of a large operation with people from RMRU (12), San Diego Mountain Rescue Team (12), Joshua Tree SAR (8), Sierra Madre SAR Team (4), San Dimas (2), Riverside County Sheriff's Office (3), El Toro Marine Base helicopter and others. Base camp operations should be commended for their control over the search effort. While directing the recall of teams by helicopter, it was always obvious they knew how many individuals were deployed, and where.
2. Helicopter pilot Don Landell made two landings into a fog covered LZ to pick up the CLMRG teams. This could only have been accomplished by an excellent pilot intimately familiar with the area. Thank you!

86-16

7/16/86

Alert

Mt. Whitney

Stogsdill

Our beepers went off at 1958 hours on 16 July while we were teaching the rock climbing session of our annual mountaineering class at School Rocks. School Rocks is located some 20 miles west of Ridgecrest, as the ravens fly, near Indian Wells Canyon. The nearest phone is about one half hour drive away; Bob Huey elected to drive there to find out what the garbled transmission was about. Huey soon returned with the message that Sgt. Reed of the Inyo Sheriff's Office had asked us to be on alert for a possible evacuation of an injured 54 year old woman located at Trail Camp on the Mt. Whitney Trail. The woman had a possible broken wrist and had suffered some degree of shock. Reed also reported that someone who knew some first aid was with her at Trail Camp

The call out consisted of a show of hands while we were gathered around the vehicles at School Rocks. Nine members were ready to charge up the trail to assist as soon as we got the go signal.

At 0300 on 17 July the alert was cancelled by a call from the Inyo Sheriff dispatcher in Independence. The woman had been assisted off the mountain and was in good condition.

CLMRG members committed were: Stogsdill, Hinman, Finco, Sakai, Seibold, Rogers, Walker, Silverman and Mitchell.

86-17

7/17-20/86

Search

Kearsarge Pass

Finco

We received a call on the pager around 1600 hours on 17 July from Sgt. Dan Lucas of Inyo County. Sgt. Lucas wanted us to begin a search for 62 year old Marcel Sommeria the next day if the Inyo County Posse could not locate him on the Kearsarge Pass trail that afternoon.

Mr. Sommeria had left for a day hike on 16 July to hike from Onion Valley to Kearsarge Pass and return. He was believed to be wearing shorts, T-shirt, hiking boots (track unknown), and he carried a sweater and some food and water in a dark green day pack. Mr. Sommeria did have a heart problem a couple years earlier, but was reported to be in good physical shape now.

Lucas called me back that evening saying that CLMRG would be needed the next day. I asked Aigner to call the roster, and Huey, Hine, Sakai, Derrickson, Gleason, Mitchell, Dan Harris, Martin, Jones, Ingle, Castro, Walker, S. Harris, Don Brubaker and Lloyd Brubaker were able to go.

We all met at the but at 0400 on Friday, 18 July, and departed soon thereafter. We arrived at the Independence airport by 0600. The sheriff had not yet arrived, so I sent an advance team of Huey, Mitchell, and Castro to verify that Mr. Sommeria's vehicle was still at Onion Valley and then to do a hasty search up the trail to Kearsarge Pass. At the pass, Mitchell was to set up a radio relay.

After base camp was established I sent. Hine, Martin and Walker up the trail to check out all the lakes. Gleason, Harris and Jones searched the Robinson Lake drainage and trail and Sakai, Derrickson and Ingle searched around Bench and Matlock Lakes.

Sgt. Lucas and 7 members from the Inyo team arrived around 0700. Three CARDA teams arrived around 0800. Two Inyo teams were sent up to search the Golden Trout Lakes trail and vicinity. The other Inyo people split up to go with the CARDA teams to search the Kearsarge Pass trail and nearby lakes.

A CHP helicopter arrived around 0900 to shuttle people and to help with an air search.

Alden Nash from the Park Service got in touch with me to let me know the Park Service was searching west of Kearsarge Pass and had set up check points at Charlotte Lake, Junction Meadow and Cedar Grove. The Park Service had been interviewing people and so far no one had seen anyone fitting Mr. Sommeria's description.

Friday afternoon Sgt. Lucas initiated a full MRA call out. Everyone except for eight people from CLMRG returned to base camp and we debriefed at the airport.

Saturday morning arrived and with that came more members from CLMRG: Stogsdill, Amster, Silverman, Sinclair and Buffum. Teams from Altadena, Bay Area, June Lake, Joshua Tree, Malibu, San Dimas, San Diego and Sierra Madre also arrived.

Arnold Gaffrey from Sierra Madre volunteered to stay in base camp, act as the MRA liaison, and to help set up and field the teams. Base camp was moved to Onion Valley.

Teams were fielded on the Kearsarge Pass Trail, at each lake along the trail, the Robinson Lake Trail, the Golden Trout Lakes trail, and the Bench Lake and Matlock Lake areas. The CHP helo again searched from the air after dropping off teams. By the afternoon other teams were sent to search in the Center Basin area, Vidette Meadows and once again in the Kearsarge Lakes and Bullfrog Lake areas.

That evening all the teams except those located west of the pass came back to base camp and debriefed.

Another HAM (Meng), came from Ridgecrest to take over for Don Brubaker. A few others left, but we still had close to 50 people to field on Sunday.

After debriefing the team leaders it was decided that the trail and lake areas had been well searched. The Park Service was continuing their interviewing and checkpoints on the west side of the Pass. So on Sunday, the teams west of the Pass continued their search assignments and the teams in base camp were briefed and given assignments for the day.

A team was sent back up to check the Little Pothole Lake and drainage areas. Another team searched down the drainage leading out of Onion Valley. Everyone else did sweeps of the lower slopes leading out of Onion Valley, and up into the mountains.

By Sunday afternoon, absolutely nothing had been found. As teams finished their assignments they came back to base camp to debrief. The decision to discontinue the search was made and the search was secured at 1330 on Sunday.

86-18 7/21-23/86 Search Twin Lakes Finco

At 1453 hours on Monday, 21 July, CLMRG received a call from the Mono County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Randy Hysell wanted us to help in a search the following day for 45 year old Lester Nedham, missing since 0830 on Saturday, 19 July.

The missing man and his hiking companion, Bruce Rabbe, were on a weekend backpacking trip. They were hiking up Little Slide Canyon when they came across a snowfield they had to cross just north of Maltby Lake. The two disagreed on the route to take so they separated. After a while Bruce decided to retreat and go the same way as Lester. Bruce had spotted Lester on the snowfield, but by the time he got back to where he had last seen Lester he could not find him. Bruce searched in the vicinity and then hiked out to report Lester missing.

Since Lester had plenty of gear to spend the night in the mountains the sheriff decided to wait. When he had not hiked out by Sunday, the June Lake team was called in to begin a search on Monday. Deputy Hysell also commented that the terrain to be searched involved technical snow and ice and that there were thunderstorms in the area.

Due to the terrain I told Sheila Rockwell to call only the Leader and Rescue categories, plus a few others. (As it eventually turned out, the terrain was not really that bad) But because of the long search over the previous weekend it was difficult to find people to agree to another one so soon. However, Sakai and DeRuiter did commit.

We mobilized at the rescue hut. at midnight, and arrived in Bridgeport at 0430 on Tuesday. We met with the sheriff, had breakfast and then headed to the Twin Lakes area.

WOOF teams searched the area where Lester was last seen. Search teams from Bay Area, China Lake, ESAR, June Lake and the Park Service were sent out on various trails and up drainages.

Sakai was sent to act as a roadblock in the Buckeye drainage area, and DeRuiter and I went up Horse Creek. By 1300 we heard reports over the radio that Lester had been found.

DeRuiter and I returned to base, while Sakai hiked in with others to help in a carry out if necessary. A helicopter from Lemoore arrived around 1700 and had Lester in the hospital by 1730. Sakai and the others arrived back at base around 2000.

It turns out that Lester was a short distance above the place he was last seen when he slipped and fell in a hole between a large boulder and the snow. He landed on his back (breaking his frame pack in two) in the stream at the bottom of the hole. People had been searching within a few feet of where he had fallen, but because of the running water in the stream Lester did not hear anyone calling his name. One of the WOOF dogs alerted at the edge of the snow above Lester. (For those of you at the CALMRA seminar in June of this year, it was the golden retriever, Zeke, who alerted on Lester.) The WOOF teams got Lester out of the hole, gave him first aid and kept him warm till the helicopter arrived.

We arrived home at 0200 on Wednesday, 23 July.

86-19	7/23/86	Incident	Robbers' Roost	Green
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On 23 July on the evening of the summer mountaineering class party, I was belaying Steve Kato on the small outcropping to the left and in front of the main face at Robbers' Roost. He fell but the fall seemed trivial. However, Steve said that he thought he had hurt his shoulder and did not want to try again. It was almost 2000 hours and time to close down the climbing, so I proceeded to clean up the belay anchors and started down. Hinman approached me and said that it appeared that Steve had a dislocated shoulder. Indeed, when I got to Steve and examined him, it was fairly obvious from the deformity and the position of comfort of his arm that the shoulder was dislocated.

Hinman and I bandaged Steve by supporting his arm in the position of comfort with padding and triangular bandages. I then took Steve to the emergency room at the Ridgecrest Community Hospital. We arrived there about 2100. By 2230 they had examined, x-rayed, and reduced the dislocation. About midnight I was told that Steve would have to spend the night in the hospital for the anesthesia to wear off. Dr. Welcome put on a support device that Steve would have to wear for the next 6 days, but no long term problems were anticipated.

/Note• While this was an unusual exercise from several points of view.. it had the common elements that are required for listing among our operations./

The main objective of our expedition to the Soviet Union this summer was Pik Kommunizma (Peak of Communism, at 24,590 feet in the Pamirs near the China and Afghanistan borders). Three CLMRGers - Mike Renta, ex-member Terry Moore, and I - and John Ellsworth of June Lake SAR made up the party. In the Pamirs we joined 76 other mountaineers from 14 nations at a base camp, hosted by the Soviet International Mountaineering Federation, from which various climbs could be made. During the month-long camp almost everyone eventually attempted Pik Kommunizma; about half were successful. There was one fatality, from high altitude pulmonary edema, and several rescues mostly due to acute mountain sickness. When we left for home there was still a party of 9 (Soviets and Czechoslovakians) at Camp 5 (22,600 feet) pinned down by storm. They had only one tent, the others having been destroyed by high winds. Nothing is known at this time about how the situation turned out.

While strong early in the trip, John developed a painful gastrointestinal problem at about 20,000 feet and eventually had to return to base camp. Mike had been ill prior to leaving the States, and was having difficulties with the rigors of the climb. Nevertheless, when the time came to leave Camp 5 for the summit push, he felt sufficiently well. We gradually became separated, however, and Terry and I alone reached the summit late in the afternoon of 1 August.

We began descending about 1800 hours, and soon encountered Mike. He was clearly exhausted and proceeding extremely slowly, climbing a few feet and then resting for a long time. We argued that if he were to continue, he would arrive back at Camp 5 in the early morning hours, at best. Given the extreme altitude and exposure with no extra food, water, stove or shelter, it would be foolhardy to do so. Fortunately, Mike agreed, and we descended with Terry and me sharing Mike's pack.

The next day we rested until after noon. I had tried to get Mike to eat and drink but with little success. At high altitude one's appetite is not good, and a person is fortunate to be able to consume enough food to even maintain basal metabolism. In Mike's state he needed to do this, plus take in enough to replenish his depleted energy stores. It was not occurring, and the full extent of his condition would not be fully apparent to us until later.

Terry and I departed a few minutes before Mike and reached Camp 4 (21,300 feet) fifty minutes later. After two hours Mike had not arrived, so I retraced our steps to look for him. When he finally appeared, I climbed to him, shouldered his pack and descended. Still he was very slow, and under his own power he took yet an additional hour to go down the last 100 feet to Camp 4.

There were some Soviet climbers at Camp 4, and I felt that they should be appraised of the situation. Finding a common communication link in the German language, we agreed that Kalev Muru would accompany us to the lower elevations of Camp 3 (20,000 feet) where it was felt that Mike's chance of recovery would be enhanced.

With Mike on a tether and his pack contents shared, we descended. Sometimes Kalev and I would support Mike on either side, sometimes he was lowered sliding down the snow slope, and sometimes he was able to walk by himself. Typically though, Kalev would be belaying Mike, I would belay behind Kalev, and Terry protected us all. We arrived at Camp 3 shortly after 2100 hours.

In spite of again resting until the afternoon of 3 August, Mike had not made any gains in strength. A mere half mile after leaving Camp 3 we all agreed a full rescue call out was now necessary. Terry and I left Mike with the tent, stove, and most of the food and began the 8 mile trek toward Camp 2 where we expected to find more Soviet climbers, with a radio to communicate with base camp.

There were several reasons for us deciding to leave Mike alone instead of one of us staying with him: (1) the limited food and fuel supplies would last longer, (2) Mike's problem was physical only; he felt fine and his mind seemed clear, and (3) sending one person alone for several miles across a known crevasse field would have been too risky.

Upon reaching Camp 2 (19,700 feet) late that evening, we were overjoyed to find that our friend Oleg Borisyonok, the camp director, was there with three other Soviet climbers. I told him of the situation, and that Terry and I hoped to be able to rest one or two days at base camp, and then would be able to assist if the operation were still going on. We spent the night and descended to base camp (13,100 feet) the next day.

On 4 August Oleg and Yuri Golodov were able to get Mike close to Camp 2. A two-day storm then dumped 2 to 3 feet of fresh snow which prevented any progress at all. In the evening of 6 August the conditions improved, and we were asked: can we climb early tomorrow to meet and assist the party down the 5,000 feet of class 3 and 4 rock and ice below Camp 2? The answer was affirmative for me, but Terry was now suffering from intestinal distress and John had already traded his Kastinger boots for 8 titanium ice screws. I made plans for an early departure with some Soviet climbers.

That night the intestinal bug finally bit me, and I was now completely helpless. The Soviets handled the situation themselves, and on 7 August Mike was delivered to base camp in time for a helicopter flight to begin the return journey towards civilization, and home. This was quite fortunate because any further stay would have violated the conditions of our visas, and disrupted return airline reservations.

Comment:

Thus ended our most remote and highest operation ever. It was long but uncomplicated. The fact that it was not complicated may tend to discount the seriousness of the situation. However, one needs only to note that someone who is incapacitated for the better part of a week at elevations in excess of 20,000 feet, several days away from safety without any hope of helicopter assistance, is in an extremely vulnerable and dangerous position. I had considerable concern, and breathed a deep sigh of relief when it was over.

86-21 8/10/86 Alert El Paso Mountains Stogsdill

I was called at 0210 Sunday, 10 August, by Kern County Sheriff's Deputy Dwayne Marney regarding two elderly women, one diabetic, who had been stranded with their disabled pickup truck. A companion told the women to stay with the truck and had walked out for help. He reported that the truck was above Holland Camp in the El Paso Mountains. Deputy Marney told me that Chief Thompson of the Randsburg Fire Department had additional information

When I called Chief Thompson he informed me that the companion had provided quite specific information on the truck's location. Thompson and personnel from the Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Land Management were leaving immediately, and he did not feel that we should be mobilized until they had checked out the situation. Thompson said he would call me back afterwards. Not wanting to arouse our membership at 0230 for a very iffy situation, I elected to stand by.

The follow-up call came from the Ridgcrest dispatcher at 1)530 to say that all was well. Both women had been found at the expected location and were on their way home

Bob Huey received a call at 1000 hours on Saturday, 16 August, from the China Lake Police, who were forwarding a request for assistance from the Mono County Sheriff's Office, regarding a search for a lost hiker. Since it was my duty weekend, I took charge of the operation and called for more information. I was informed by Deputy Randy Hysell that Ron Brown had disappeared while climbing Mt. Davis, west of June Lake. He had become separated from his companions on Thursday, 14 August, and did not return to their Donahue Meadows camp. On Friday Brown's companions started to search for him and sent two people out to notify the authorities.

A call out was begun by C. Burge and S. Rockwell with five people responding: Lucas, Finco, Mitchell, D. Burge and Bonbright. We left Ridgecrest at 1200 hours and arrived at the June Lake base camp at 1530. June Lake Search and Rescue had had teams in the field since morning without finding any sign of Brown.

At 1700 we were flown by CHP and Yosemite helicopters to Donahue Meadows along with the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit and the Explorer Search and Rescue team. This location was to serve as a base camp from which all the field teams would be dispatched to their assigned search areas. While we were waiting for the last of the personnel to be transported to the meadows the Yosemite helo found Brown in good condition. The time was 1615 hours. We were all flown back to June Lake and arrived back in Ridgecrest by 2330.

Comments:

1. We didn't bring crampons along. They could have been necessary had this operation continued. Not having crampons when they are needed greatly reduces your mobility and therefore your effectiveness in a search. We should always consider taking them when going into the mountains. If they are not needed you can always leave them in the car.
2. The Donahue Meadows base camp was located at the edge of the search area. It seems a more central location might, have been chosen.

Shortly after 1600 hours on 24 August, Phil Lester of Sierra Madre SRT telephoned Al Green. An eight year old girl had been missing in the vicinity of Porcupine Flat, about halfway between the Valley and Tuolumne Meadows, since 1000 that morning. If she was not found by 2030 hours, a region-wide call out was to be initiated, with teams in the field the following morning. Since it was my duty weekend, Al called me with the information and told Phil that the follow-on calls should be directed to me. Al added that he was available. Before I had a chance to get our coordinators working, Phil telephoned me about 1645 with the happy news that the girl had been found, in good shape.

DONOR'S CORNER

Although long-time friends Stan and Lolette Dalbec couldn't make it over to our annual summer party, they did send in a generous donation. We do appreciate it! Rick Strasser of Frazier Park also sent in a donation, with a note that he would like to receive the Talus Pile. Thank you!

MOUNTAINEERING CLASS

Once again, our annual summer class in basic mountaineering and mountaineering safety seemed to be well received by the community. We consider that teaching this class is one of our most important functions and we put a lot of effort into it. The students learn the concepts and skills which we hope will prevent them from getting into trouble in the mountains. Also, the most capable graduates of the class are often motivated to join CLMRG as rescue group trainees, and in fact this constitutes our most important source of new members.

We had 44 students which was actually a little above our desired limit, and 18 of these satisfied all of the rather stringent requirements for receiving the CLMRG certificate of completion.

The class spanned almost two months and consisted of 6 two-hour lecture sessions on Tuesdays, accompanied by 7 outdoor practical sessions on Wednesday evenings. Students participated in a day climb of Telescope Peak and in a weekend climb of one of several Sierra Peaks.

The lead instructors for this year's class once again relied heavily on other CLMRG personnel. A total of 42 CLMRG members participated by either presenting lectures or giving hands-on instruction in practical mountaineering and rock climbing. The lead instructors would like to express their deep appreciation for all the assistance from other members.

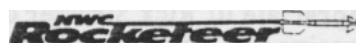
In particular, we would like to thank member **Shannon Harris** for helping out in so many ways. She attended every lecture session, performing all of the many expected and unexpected administrative tasks which seemed to arise. She also assisted in every laboratory session and participated in the day climbs and overnight climbs. No one could have given more of their time, and we always knew that those many tasks that Shannon was taking care of were ones that we would not have to worry about. Thanks, Shannon!

Daryl Hinman

Bob Rockwell

EXERCISE FOR MOUNTAINEERS

The China Lake Desert Dancers meet every Thursday at 7:30 pm at the NWC Gym Annex for an evening of international folk dancing. For over 25 years members of CLMRG have found folk dancing to be an enjoyable way to supplement their conditioning program. A 10 week beginner's class will be starting on 18 September, with Jan Schulz instructing. This would be the best time to get started. No partner is needed. For further information contact Dennis Burge at 3757967.



HEALTH TIP:

Every year, disease and lost productivity due to smoking costs the United States \$65 million.

ACCIDENTS IN NORTH AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING

Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the Safety Committee of The American Alpine Club and The Alpine Club of Canada

United States: While there was an increase in the number of accidents reported this year, there was a significant decrease in the number of fatalities. Another project underway, along with attempting to put together a data base, is a long range analysis of the fatalities in North American mountaineering. One impetus for this is to help the custodians of public and private climbing areas, as well as the insurance companies and media, more clearly understand the facts and figures. The level of current understanding has resulted in a somewhat distorted picture of the risk levels in the sport. More than once, mountaineering has been ranked as being in the top five of the most dangerous sports. Inquiries as to how such an assignment was arrived at have yielded no solid basis for same, and therefore, the AAC Safety Committee hopes to be able to provide a clear understanding of actual risk levels.

During the past year, we once again saw a number of falls resulting in injuries because of no or inadequate protection, which really includes protection coming out and belays not working. Over half of the injuries incurred were due to these contributory factors. Many climbers are using Friends where a good stopper would be more appropriate, and many are also going far enough beyond the last piece of protection so that maximum stress is being exerted upon it. More training in this aspect of climbing seems warranted.

As the year ended, an insurance crisis loomed on the horizon, and by the time our publication comes out, many climbing guides (and other outdoor guide services) may be out of business for the time being. One effort that is moving forward is that of gathering data from mountain guides and guide services on their number of accidents *and* user days over the past decade. Again, the custodians of climbing areas and all others who can prevent access need to have a solid factual basis from which to make decisions. As in past years, help is needed in getting these facts to us.

We still have a long way to go in the education process. The most illustrative example of need in 1985 was in a letter written to Denali National Park, in which, among other things, the prospective climber inquired, "One other very important question I have is are there firearms allowed in the park as for protection and does one need to technically climb—ropes and gromets (sic)—or can one hike to the summit of Mt. McKinley? My last question is, is Mt. McKinley usually covered with snow around the first of June?" The only fortunate aspect of this is that the young man, in his earl:: twenties, did write and the park was able to respond before the inevitable occurred.

CALDWELL By Caldwell

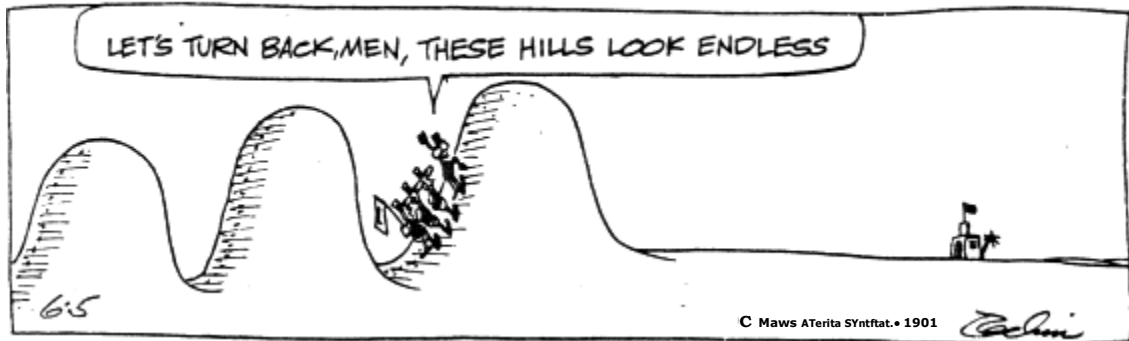
ANOTHER ANNOYING ROADBLOCK IN THE
SEARCH FOR THE MEANING OF LIFE...

422 of 754 Succeed in Climbing Mt. McKinley

TALKEETNA, Alaska (UPI)—More people tried to climb Mt. McKinley, North America's tallest mountain, this year than ever before, but only about half of them succeeded, National Park Service rangers said Monday. Of the 754 people from all over the world who sought to stand at the 20,320-foot summit, 422 succeeded, mountaineering ranger Ralph Moore said.



CROCK By Rechin and Wilder



From the China Lake
Mountain Rescue Group
P.O. Box 2037
Ridgecrest, CA 93555