

Mintcake



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Editor's Comments

This month's newsletter is rather shorter than usual for which I apologise. A combination of completing work before going to Scotland for a week's winter training with the dog and then searches on two consecutive nights into the early hours, including the search at Morecambe Bay for the cocklers (which will be reported more fully next month) disrupted the best laid plans.

However, the events of last night reinforce a number of aspects of our work. With talk in the media of "illegal immigrants" starting almost immediately, it becomes easier to forget that these were people, a large number of whom met an unpleasant death. Those from the Team who assisted the Coast Guard did so irrespective of any considerations of alleged illegality or culpability on the part of any of the casualties, simply because people were in desperate need of assistance. Sadly, for many of those involved, help came too late.

As ever, our role is not to condemn but to offer what assistance we can when it is needed.

Les

Working Groups

Base & Vehicles

Help is needed with cleaning the base on Saturday – yes, today, from 9am until midday.

Equipment

The personal 1st aid kits will soon be ready. John Hall will page out a message to let Casualty Care Certificate holders know when they can collect their kit from the Equipment Room.

What's On

Wednesday 11 February

Training: Night orienteering 19.00 hrs

Wednesday 25 February

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

Wednesday 31 March

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

Wednesday 28 April

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

Wednesday 26 May

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

Wednesday 23 June

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

Exercise Report s

Wednesday 14 January

Winter Skills

Thanks to Andy Dell and Andy Beavon who put together an informative presentation on avalanches. The evening covered:

- Assessing avalanche risk
- Planning a safe route in winter, thus reducing the risk of being caught in or triggering an avalanche
- Self-preservation if caught in an avalanche
- What to do if you witness someone else being caught in an avalanche
- Using avalanche probes and transceivers
- The role of a mountain rescue team

If you are not familiar with the above, recommended reading is 'A Chance in a Million' by Bob Barton and Blythe Wright. This is specifically about Scottish avalanches, which can present quite different risks from Alpine ones. Due to climatic changes, next year's winter lecture will be on 'Tidal Waves', with a demo on Wellington Boot Techniques, and recommended reading 'Makeshift Rafts out of Ice-Axes' by P. Singh and I.T. Down.

Paul Astle, KMSRT

Wednesday 21 January

Radios - the Basics

This session was to inform us pre-provisionals and provisional members about radios. A big thank you to Eddie who delivered a very informative, practical-based evening with help from other team members, which gave us a really useful insight to the use of radios and their operation within the Team.

The evening started with an instructive chat on the basics, such as operating channels, procedures and maintenance, along with examples of the type of comments we will probably want to avoid, such as "The Land Rover has just rolled over, over!"

We then split into two groups to go outside and practise scenarios, with the base being manned by Eddie, Dave and a first-time sterling job done by Hilary, (for those of you who don't know, Hilary cleans the base, so a big thank you). This gave us all a really good practice in using the radios along with a lot of laughter!

It also highlighted some very important points as things got a bit confused when using relays!

- Be clear in who you are calling, followed by who you are
- Think about what you are going to say before speaking
- Your message should be clear and concise and preferably short (some poor soul also has to write a log!)
- Beware when passing information, in particular with reference to the casualty, over the radio as you don't know who else is listening.
- Grid references and any other important information should always be double-checked as distortion can happen – and then become compounded!
- Remember to sign off with "out" when you have finished your message.

Once again, thanks to all involved in providing a helpful yet fun evening.

Sarah Graham, KMSRT

Sunday 25 January

Winter Navigation

The Team laptop and digital projector once again proved its worth as Andy Dell gave a 5-minute presentation on basic navigation principles and described various methods (pacing, timing, aiming off, search spirals, boxing bad ground, use of mini legs), some of which we would then be able to put into practice on the fell afterwards.

Navigation can be summed up in two Golden Rules:

Rule 1:

The 3Ds:

- Distance
- Direction
- Description

Rule 2:

You **NEVER** get lost (temporary displacement is permitted!)

How did all that fit into 5 minutes?

We then drove to the top of the Kirkstone Pass and walked up towards St. John's Banner to work in small groups, doing micro-navigation.

The weather was kind to us so we could always see where we were, but this meticulous map and compass work was a reminder of just how vital these skills are if we are to provide an effective search and rescue service.

As ever, thanks to Andy for his preparation and presentation, and to those who led the groups

Sunday's exercise also saw the introduction of the Training Logbook which is intended to enable Team members to

maintain a record of the training attended, monitor their own competence and development, appraise their own skills and knowledge and identify areas for further training. Oh, and the creative among you can try to see just how many boxes you can tick for a single training session!

Callouts



2 January

The Team was called out for a search of the Kentmere fells after 2 people failed to turn up at the agreed rendezvous. We were stood down en route to Kentmere when the couple turned up. It seems the rendezvous was not as agreed as all that...

31 January

One Team vehicle was on standby at L&A Base as this was the day of the new base's official opening. On returning to Kendal, the vehicle was asked to return because there was the possibility of a missing canoeist. He turned up safely, and the 5 Team members were able to return to Kendal.

Kess and Les were involved in a number of searches during January:



17 January

A search of fields and woodland near Maryport for a despondent 70 year old man. No trace was found.

22 January

A 71 year old man known to like mines failed to return home. He was located 40 feet down a mine shaft where he had been standing for 10 hours as he was unable to climb back up his rope.

26/27 January

A despondent elderly man went missing in Penrith. SARDA dogs assisted Penrith team to search on Monday evening and then returned at first light on Tuesday. Sadly, the man was found dead by Penrith team members shortly after the search re-commenced.

Team Training in Scotland

Those attending the training weekend in Scotland are asked to let the Secretary have a cheque for the relevant amount as soon as possible, made payable to Kendal Mountain Search and Rescue Team.

Fund Raising

A lot of money is raised for the team via collecting boxes in shops, B&Bs etc. These require emptying, counting and banking two or three times a year. Team President Phil Morgan co-ordinates this and would welcome assistance, particularly from newer members of the Team. Contact Phil at phil.morgan@volkerstevin.co.uk or leave a message for him at Base.

Barbellate

Forward To The Past

Does this sound like someone (or even a number of people) that you know? "He was around in the 1970's, had long hair, a splattering of facial hair, and wore red socks and distinctive leg coverings." Was this not the archetypal dress of the climber from thirty years ago? If you added woolly check shirt, Whillans harness and Joe Brown helmet – you would probably have described 80% of the males (and 10% of the females) seen on the crags at a time when Black Sabbath were releasing 'Paranoid'. So, having accurately described over 50% of the current membership of the Team (i.e. probably you), would you be offended if this description was used in a mocking way to advertise a new over-priced and not very effective product? Probably not. So why is Dave Bedford (10,000m runner from the 1970's) so uptight about the directory enquiry company 118118 using the image of a typical 1970's runner (red socks, patterned shorts, silly moustache, long hair)? Maybe he is worried about spoiling his memory of a golden period – don't worry about it Dave, recreate the period!

We should do the same with the Team – let's have a 'retro' phase. Dagmar should put in an order for orange canvas smocks and Arran sweaters to replace all the Rab kit, John E could look around for a Series 2 Land Rover with sideward facing rear seats for the Mobile 2 replacement, Rob could look forward to getting a free issue of 6 Pye Bantam radios from the Police. Transition to this phase may have already started, it has been pointed out to me that Chris has rejected using tape for his ice-axe strap and has a nice piece of hawser-laid (possibly hemp) rope. Is there any support out there amongst the readership for this great idea? What do you think we should bring back into use? Let the Editor know.

Enough of this, let me tell you about a marvellous book – 'The Lure Of The Mountains'. It is an anthology of mountaineering stories, all interesting in their own right. But the book's beauty is that the original stories (from all around the world) had been translated (no, not by Les) for a Swiss audience; then it was re-translated (!) into English by an American and then the book printed in Belgium. There are a number of interesting descriptions to accompany the excellent photographs:

'Climbing the steepest path is easier today because stationary ropes have been installed.' The Alp shepherd family sits at the lunch table... the tatsch steams from a pan, which has been attached to a plank.'

'At the Moor south wall, guide Paul Etter puts his hook into the wall. His foot is resting in a ladder, which is indispensable in such a difficult terrain. His elegant posture does not show strenuous it is to overcome such steep walls.'

"Barbellate"

General News

In the January 2004 issue of 'MRC News' (copies at Base, just pick one up) there is a competition to win 'SealSkinz' socks and gloves. You just need to answer a few questions and send off your name and address, along with your *hat* and glove size. So can those clever people at SealSkinz deduce your shoe size from the size of your bobble hat? What will it mean if Dagmar asks for your ear size prior to getting a new issue of kit?

⌘

Dan Golding, formerly a Team member, now Training Officer for Coniston, was in Nepal in November to take part in the Everest Challenge. He finished thirteenth and was the first non-Nepali finisher. He reports also that almost all of those who beat him had summited Everest...

A more detailed report can be read in the next issue of MRC News in April.

Contacts

E-mail

les.telford@dial.pipex.com

or

on +44 (0)1539 727051

or

Editor's pigeon hole in base

or by mail to:-

Newsletter Editor

Kendal Mountain Rescue

Busher Walk

Kendal

Cumbria

LA9 4RH

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