



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

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

SEPTEMBER 2-4	Tuolumne Meadows	Hinman
SEPTEMBER 9-10	Mts. Thompson & Gilbert	Rockwell
SEPTEMBER 11	Meeting	Westbrook
SEPTEMBER 12	Mini-Stretcher Class Starts (Tuesdays)	Training Committee
SEPTEMBER 16-17	Mt. Abbot	Renta
SEPTEMBER 23-24	Mt. Mendel	Ostermann
SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1	Zion Narrows	Renta
OCTOBER 7-9	Yosemite Valley	Mitchell
OCTOBER 14-15	Tahquitz	Hueber
OCTOBER 16	Meeting	Huey

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**The worst day mountaineering is better than the best day fishing!**

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# OPERATION REPORTS

## **89-8            6/11/89            Mobilization Cottonwood Canyon Lucas**

At 1225 on Sunday, 11 June, Al Green got a call from Deputy Mike Nash of the Inyo County Sheriffs Office. A woman hang glider pilot had taken off from Walt's Point on the Horseshoe Meadow road and was down somewhere in Cottonwood Canyon. Al had Sheila Rockwell coordinate a team callout, with Betty Meng assisting. Six of us (Al, Bob Adams, Dennis Burge, Ron Leiser, Roger Meng, and myself) responded. As we were getting ready to drive north, the operation was called off by Inyo CSO. (We assume a helo spotted and rescued the subject.) But, another problem had occurred -- see next report.

Comments: 1. Deputy Nash had tried the paging system, but got no response. A phone backup is still necessary. 2. Al was able to talk to Inyo Dispatch using a mobile radio at the hut. This is a good way to maintain contact during mobilization and transit of operations in Inyo County.

## **89-9 6/11-12/89 Recovery South of Split Mountain Green**

A body recovery from the Palisade glacier was the stated problem. Of course we needed much more information. The answers were obtained from Doug Wilson of the Inyo team. The victim (Robert Good, 42 from Marina Del Rey) had fallen while traversing the crest south of Split Mountain. He was following twenty feet behind Dick Beach. The edge gave way and Robert fell several hundred feet, landing in a snow chute. It took Dick an hour and a half to get down to Robert, and then about five hours to get out to report the fatality.

We planned to go in by helicopter the first thing in the morning. Inyo would set up a base camp at the Taboose Creek Campground and make the arrangements for the helicopter. The same group who had committed for the previous operation - Dennis Burge, Andy Mitchell, Ron Leiser, and myself - also committed for this one. Sheila Rockwell and Betty Meng called for

additional members, with the requirement that they be very comfortable with ice axe and crampons. Linda Finco, Tom Roseman and Mike Wisecarver responded. We met at the hut at 0430 and left at 0445, arriving at base camp at 0645. The Forest service contract helicopter (Rogers), arrived on time and flew in a first team of Finco and Roseman, along with a stretcher and minimal gear. Shortly after 0800, Linda reported that they had spotted the victim and that he was quite a ways up a snow chute. They needed two more people with ropes and snow flukes. Mike and I went in to assist. We were deposited on a snow field down the canyon from the bottom of the chute containing the victim. All of us worked our way up to the bottom of the chute and cached all the extra gear. We climbed up to the victim and lowered him 500 feet to the bottom of the chute. The stretcher was rigged for a long line and the helicopter called back in to make the pickup. The pickup was made at 1050 and after 2 more trips to pick us up; we were all off the mountain by 1140.

Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout, assisted by Betty Meng. Larry Seibold committed.

Comments: When we are traversing a crest, it is very wise to stay a few feet away from the edge.

## **89-10 6/18/89 Incident Mt. Whitney Green**

A Sunday hike up the Mt. Whitney trail by Steve Walker, Nancy Gray, and Al Green turned into a minirescue. In the vicinity of Mirror Lake a young man coming down the trail asked us if we had seen a ranger and said that he was going out to get help for a person at Trail Camp who was unable to walk out. We told him that we were members of the CLMRG and that we would do what we could, but that he should continue on out to report the incident.

Arriving at Trail Camp, we met Steve and Mike Fernandez. Mike was clearly not feeling well, but after talking to him awhile, I decided that we could safely walk him

# OPERATION REPORTS

out. I then sent Steve Walker out to turn off the rescue. Mike and his brother had started up the trail the night before, hiking all night by moonlight and had gotten to within a half mile of the summit early Sunday morning. Both brothers were used to extending themselves physically while bicycling, but not in the mountains. Mike got violently nauseous and they turned around and managed to get back to Trail Camp. They had no overnight gear and were convinced that they needed rescuing. A little food (Power Bars), plain water and a slow constant pace all the way out did the trick. Fortunately, because Steve Walker moved quickly and because of a telephone problem at the Whitney Portal store, the rescuer callout was aborted before it was started.

## **89 - 11 6 / 28 / 89 Incident Mt. Logan Rockwell Yukon Territory**

We (Daryl Hinman, Bart Hine, Chris Ostermann and I) were at the 11,000 foot level, descending from CLMRG's attempt on the steep east ridge of Canada's highest mountain. This part of the route abounds with 50° to 70° knife-edge ice ridges and 45° to 50° snow and ice slopes. A few feet off the ridge, there are crevasses and glacial bergschrunds galore. Today, Daryl and Chris comprised the first rope; Bart and I followed.

I rounded a corner to a chilling view; Chris was in a sitting position, rearing back with crampons and ice axe dug in. The taut rope attached to his harness extended 40 ft. downward to disappear into a deep hole. Protected by Bart's belay, I traveled as quickly as I could and yelled: "Daryl ! Are you OK ?!". No answer. Closer, I yelled again. This time there was a response: "Bob, I'm hurt !" Clearly, both good and bad news.

When I reached the bergschrund and peered into the abyss, I spotted Daryl. He had fallen headfirst about 20 feet, after the corniced edge of the bergschrund had collapsed, before the rope stopped him. He was holding his face and there was a considerable amount of red-stained snow everywhere. Besides his face, his nose

was bleeding and he was spitting blood. However, he appeared lucid and calm and said there was little pain.

Daryl said he could jumare out if I tied off a length of rope for him. Working quickly because of the danger that he might go into shock, I set a picket solidly in to the ice, backed it up with another, and attached the rope. Daryl tied in, removed his pack, and jumared up to where I could assist him out and over to a safe area. His total time in the bergschrund was about 45 minutes.

I treated his injuries. Of most concern was the deep gash beside his nose. A four-tail bandage, with a wad of gauze to apply gentle pressure and hold the edges of the wound together, was applied. Later, various facial swelling and color changes which appeared and disappeared over the next several days would contribute to the evidence that he had suffered a fractured nose and possibly also a fractured cheekbone.

We retrieved Daryl's pack, and Bart and Chris could finally come off-belay to join us. We set up camp to give Daryl a long rest and a chance for all our hearts to slow down.

After three more days of descent we reached our base camp to radio the bush pilot for a pick up. We were flown out on 1 July. With a nice hot shower, Daryl was able to remove the blood-soaked bandages to view a much improved situation. By now, his face didn't look any worse than that of the loser in a bar-room brawl.

Notes: 1. We packed snow on Daryl's face continuously for about three hours after the fall. This undoubtedly contributed to the low amount of swelling and pain, and his relatively rapid recovery. 2. A big mistake was not administering the heavy-duty antibiotics we had in our medical kit. While there are few if any germs habituating this land of ice and rock, its human intruders certainly brought in their share. An infection this close to the brain could have had serious consequences since medical help-or any other kind, for that matter-was so remote. 3. Because Daryl was leading the descent at the time, he was

# OPERATION REPORTS

carrying almost all the hardware for anchors. He was able to pass the pickets up to me on the second rope. Had he been unable to do so, setting anchors would have been considerably more difficult. 4. As mountain rescuers we study and practice first aid even though we know it is most likely that we will apply it to our climbing partners, rather than the victims we are called upon to rescue (in a rescue situation the victim is almost always stabilized by the time we get there). This certainly held true in our case.

## **89-12 7/18-19/89 Rescue Chicken Spring Lake Hinman**

William Key and his two sons, 17 year old Kevin and 14 year old Carey, were on their third day of a four day backpacking trip. While camped at Chicken Spring Lake, which is just west of Cottonwood Pass in the Inyo National Forest, a family disturbance ensued. During this disturbance, Kevin poured white gas over his own head and ignited it with a match. In the 30 seconds it took for his father to extinguish the flames, Kevin received second and third degree burns over his head, face, neck, shoulders, chest, arms, and hands. Kevin's resistance and fuel soaked clothing made extinguishing the flames difficult. Efforts included throwing dirt on him. Water from the lake was used in an attempt to cool the burned skin and wash off the dirt. Leaving Kevin with his brother and other nearby campers, William hiked five miles to the roadhead at Horseshoe Meadow and drove to Lone Pine for help.

CLMRG was contacted at 2230, via the pager, by the China Lake Police, about 3 hours after the incident had occurred. I took the call and was directed to the Tulare County Sheriffs Office. Technically this lake is in their county (by less than half a mile), but their preference was to let the Inyo County Sheriffs Office handle it, since logistically that was much better. I phoned Kevin's father and discussed the incident, the extent of the injuries and first-aid given. He was able to give an exact location of their camp. I then initiated a callout of the roster through Carol Burge.

By the time I got to the hut Green, Finco, Mitchell, and D. Burge were already there. They formed the advance team and were on the road by midnight. Later Hine, DeRuiter, Silverman, Seibold, and S. Walker were dispatched. Meanwhile I made several calls to the Tulare and Inyo County Sheriff Office's trying to establish helicopter support. Knowing the seriousness of the injuries and that there would be little that our people could do for Kevin; I could not emphasize enough the importance of a helicopter evacuation at first light.

When Roger Meng arrived we left for Lone Pine. He was to provide communication through his Ham radio from the remote base camp. We met Inyo County Deputy Craig Oyster in Lone Pine and drove to Horseshoe Meadow where base camp was established.

By 0400 the advance team arrived at the subject's camp. Kevin's burns were as reported, with loose hanging and charred skin. The worst areas were his left neck and shoulder. He also had white fluid coming out his left ear. However, he was lucid and both his breathing and vision did not appear impaired. The advance team did what they could to further stabilize him. Green wanted to consult directly with a doctor, so we called in an ambulance which had direct communication with the hospital. Meanwhile we learned that a helicopter from the Naval Weapons Center at China Lake would be coming in at 0600 to make the evacuation.

When the ambulance arrived, Kevin's condition was discussed with the doctor at the Lone Pine hospital where he was to be flown. It was decided not to attempt any treatment of the burns since evacuation was probably imminent. A landing zone was located that was both close and appropriate for the single engine Huey, which would be flying close to its limitations. The NWC helo flew directly to the area from China Lake. After the helo landed, Kevin was carefully placed in a litter and carried to the landing zone. He was loaded and the helo was airborne by 0625. He was given an IV

## OPERATION REPORTS

during the flight to the hospital, arriving there about eleven hours after the incident had occurred. He was later flown by Medivac to the burn center at Fresno.

CLMRG members enjoyed some coffee and hot chocolate provided by other campers at the lake before hiking out with Carey and the subject's gear. We were at the parking lot by 1000 and headed to Lone Pine, where we returned Carey to his father and had breakfast compliments of the Inyo Sheriff. The China Lake helicopter crew was Lt. John Brooks, Pilot, Maj. Chris Ladd, Co-Pilot, Darren Dillon, Crew Chief, and Roger McClure, Hospital Corpsman. We returned to Ridgecrest and secured by 1330. Other CLMRG members involved in the operation and not previously mentioned are Janet Westbrook who assisted in the callout, and Betty Meng who was the in-town Ham contact.

Comments: Everything went very well. Because of the rapid response of both CLMRG and the NWC helo, I don't think Kevin could have gotten medical help any sooner.

2. This was the first time we have worked with Deputy Oyster. He and the dispatcher in the Independence substation did an excellent job of providing the necessary support. 3. Kevin was not moved from the tent where he was found by CLMRG until the helo was on the ground and ready to make the pick-up. We did not want to risk disturbing his condition by causing him any unnecessary pain.

### **89-13 25-26 Jul 89 Rescue Mt. Tinemaha Finco/Hinman**

The Inyo County Sheriff called on the pager around 1500 on Tuesday, 25 Jul. Lt. Goodrich needed technical people to rescue one of two hang glider pilots who had crashed on Mt. Tinemaha. The second pilot was hiking out on his own. Carol Burge agreed to call down the roster until she had four technical people that could leave within the hour if the NWC helicopter was available.

At 1550, I convinced Lt. Krise with the NWC SAR helicopter, that the hour in

transportation time saved by using the helicopter could make the difference in whether the rescuers got to the hang glider pilot that evening. Lt. Krise asked that the CLMRG members meet at the airfield at 1630.

Daryl Hinman, Bart Hine, Andrew Mitchell and Tom Roseman met at the airfield and were transported to the Taboose Creek Campground where the Inyo County Sheriff Search and Rescue Posse had established a base camp. Arriving at 1800, they learned that the Forest Service helicopter had established a landing zone in the 11400 ft. basin above Red Lake and southwest of the 12561 ft. Mt. Tinemaha summit. Doug Wilson of Inyo had just been flown in to the landing zone and was proceeding up to the crash site located at 12200 ft. in a steep chute running down from the summit on the northeast side. Hine flew in next, followed by Hinman and Mitchell and later by Roseman and Pat Elliot and Ellen Siegal of Inyo.

The hang glider pilot was Liavan Mallin, 26, from Dublin Ireland. She had been in the states for 4 weeks, hang gliding in the L.A. area and the Sierras. She had set two woman's world records for distance and was attempting a third gliding from Walt's Point near Cottonwood to Gabb's Airport in Nevada. As she was trying to gain altitude over Mt. Tinemaha she hit turbulence which flipped her upside down, damaging her hang glider. She was at 13000 ft. and started falling in a flat spin. She deployed her parachute which cushioned her crash on the mountain. Luckily she landed in the middle of a wide 40 degree scree chute instead of on one of the many sharp ridges or steep cliffs in the area. She got out of the harness and away from the glider just in case it tumbled down the mountain. Another hang glider pilot saw her crash, so he flew over her to see if she was all right. He got caught in the same turbulence and crashed about 500 ft. below her. He had a radio, so he contacted help on the Forest Service frequency. The Forest Service helicopter flew over the area and spotted the hang gliders. The second hang glider pilot could not get to Liavan and since he was not injured he began to

## OPERATION REPORTS

hike down the mountain. The helicopter flew over the area with a sign with the message "Stay put" for Liavan. She could not read the sign, so after the helicopter flew away she waited about two hours and then became worried and decided to work her way down the mountain. She was cold and wanted to get out before dark. She had injured both knees in the crash and could not put any weight on her legs, so she began scooching down the east side of the mountain using her arms and backside. She had gone down about 500 ft. when the helicopter flew back over the area. This time she understood the signals to stay put. She stayed in this position until Hine and Hinman arrived at 1930.

She was in good shape except for her injured knees which were bruised and swollen. Hine and Hinman dressed some minor scrapes on her knees and wrapped them with elastic bandages. By 2000, just before dark, they began raising Liavan on ropes they had set. The raising consisted of a belay from the rear with lots of tension so she could backwards up the mountain. She was able to do this with some discomfort and lots of rest stops. Meanwhile Mitchell and Wilson set ropes to the top of the chute. She was on the summit ridge by 2330. A flat spot were a sleeping bag had been prepared for her. She promptly went to sleep and had a relatively comfortable night. Hinman discussed with base camp the possibilities of using a helicopter to long line Liavan from the ridge. Since the Forest Service helicopter could not do this procedure a request for more people was made. The seven rescuers then bivvied for the night on the ridge.

Back in town, while all the above was going on, I had Carol Burge call down the roster for more technical people who could leave early the next morning in case more help was needed. At around 2100 Lt. Goodrich, informed me that the rescuers had requested a helicopter to long line the injured woman off the top of the mountain and for more people just in case a helicopter was not available. Lt. Goodrich agreed that I could contact the MRA to request more people. I asked John Innskeep from the

Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team for six to ten technical people to be on standby until the sheriff found out if a helicopter would be available. At 2230 I got a call from Lt. Goodrich saying a helicopter would not be available for doing a long line lift off the top of the mountain. However, rescuers were with the injured woman and they were walking her down to the landing zone to be picked up there the next morning. I cancelled the MRA call out. A few minutes later Arnold Gaffrey of Sierra Madre called to say that they wanted to start driving that evening. I told him that no more people were requested for the next day. I went to bed at 2300 and shortly thereafter received a call from Lt. Goodrich. There had been some misinformation from base camp. The injured woman was unable to walk, so more people would be needed to get her down to the landing zone. I jumped out of bed and reactivated the MRA call out. Sierra Madre had four people who could go and I decided that would be enough. Carol called the two people who had committed to go from CLMRG and told them to meet at the hut at 0330.

Dave Silverman, Kit Antonsen and I left the hut by 0400. We arrived in base camp at 0600 right behind Sierra Madre. The estimated time for the lowering to the landing zone was 5 to 6 hours. Teams started flying in at 0700 and by 0800 we were able to join the rescuers who were lowering Liavan. The first part of the lowering was along the summit ridge about 100 ft. below the crest and across a 30 degree talus slope. Because the lowering was at a 45 degree angle to the fall line the lowering consisted of a series of six lowering/belay anchors which were spaced about 50 lateral feet apart. These anchors were sequentially loaded as the stretcher traversed beneath them. With this method we were able to keep two ropes on the stretcher at all times and minimize the pendulum should one belay fail. The ropes were tied to the top corner of the stretcher to provide the best angle of pull.

We decided to use a Thompson litter to lower her down the second section which was 1500 ft. of steep talus. The litter is

# OPERATION REPORTS

hard plastic and would slide easily over the rock while being belayed down the slope. The pilot tried to check a possible landing zone further down the ridge, but the winds caught his tail rotor and made his hover very unstable. We thanked him for trying and continued with the task of lowering Liavan. The lowering required 4 anchor stations, two of 300 ft. and two of 450 ft. Five to six people stayed with the stretcher to help guide and haul it down the steep slope. The stretcher was belayed by two ropes the entire lowering.

When we reached the flat floor of the landing zone basin Liavan was transferred back into the wheeled stretcher and wheeled about 200 yards to the landing zone. We all arrived at the landing zone around 1400. At 1600 the Forest Service helicopter was released from a fire it had been fighting and started to transport people off the mountain. Before the last people were heloed out, the helicopter came in to long line out some gear. Near the Red Creek drainage the net containing the ropes and other miscellaneous gear came undone and dropped to the ground. As we flew out we looked for where it might have dropped, but we could not see anything. We were all out of the field by 1800. Lee Lucas drove to the base camp to help transport people back to Ridgcrest. We arrived back at the but at 2130.

Comments: Using both the Stokes/wheel and Thompson litters allowed us to optimize to different requirements during the lowering. This requires a subject who is able to be transferred of course. Someone needs to design one stretcher with the best features of both the Stokes and Thompson.

## **89-14 29-30 Jul 89 Transit Y o s e m i t e N P L u c a s**

My pager went off about 1600 Saturday, 29 Jul, as I was renting a movie at the Warehouse. It was Daryl Hinman asking me to call him about a search in Yosemite Valley. (It was my weekend duty.) When I called, Daryl said a marathon runner was last seen on Thursday about noon at the

Yosemite Falls trailhead. Yosemite NP had searched Friday and Saturday with no luck and was making an MRA region callout (via Sierra Madre). Daryl added that he could not go. I called Mary Schmierer to coordinate a team callout and asked people to meet at the but at 1900. Mary asked Betty Meng to help call the roster.

Response to the callout was meager. Only three of us (Steve Walker, Nancy Gray, and myself) left for Yosemite at 1930. We reached the Valley at 0100 Sunday, 30 July, and crashed until first light at 0530. When we reported to the Fire Station at 0600 as requested, we learned that CLMRG was also involved in a rescue on Mt. Whitney and probably needed us. I called Inyo County Sheriff dispatch and was patched through to Doug Wilson at Lone Pine Airport. Doug said a climber on the East Face route (see #89-15) had fallen near the top of the Grand Staircase and had a broken back and internal injuries. Six CLMRG members were in the field, four Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team members were enroute, and two Riverside MRU members were expected. He added that he had been trying all night to locate a CH-47 Chinook helo that could lift the victim from the summit, but with no success. It looked like a long stretcher carry out down the trail.

Based on that information, I told Doug to expect us about 1100. We were released from the Yosemite search, along with two others from Sierra Madre. The five of us drove to Lone Pine airport to join the rescue on Whitney. Later Sunday afternoon we learned that the Yosemite victim, Wendell Blakeney, had been found deceased near North Dome. Apparently, he had tried to take a short cut back to the Valley and had fallen while descending steep slabs above Mirror Lake.

Round trip miles: 530; total manhours: 56.

## **89-15 8/29-30/89 Rescue M t . W h i t n e y H i n e**

China Lake Mountain Rescue Group, Inyo County Search and Rescue, Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team, Forest Service, California Air National Guard, and

# OPERATION REPORTS

concerned mountaineers combined their time and expertise to aid an injured climber on Mt. Whitney. Rob Weingruber and Walker White were climbing the East Face Route. They had reached the Grand Staircase (approx. 500 ft. below the summit) when Rob was struck on the helmet and back by a baseball size rock. The rock had been dislodged by the rope of a team climbing above them.

The team whose rope had dislodged the rock quickly climbed down to help. They found Rob unconscious. While bringing Walker up to their level, Rob regained consciousness. He complained of back pain and was bleeding from the mouth. It was decided that Rob may have suffered a broken back and internal injuries. Walker stayed with Rob while the other two climbers went for help. It was around 1900 before they reached Whitney Portals and contacted the Inyo County Sheriff. Rob and Walker spent the night on the face of Whitney where the temperatures dipped below freezing. During this time, the Inyo Sheriff contacted CLMRG to handle the operation. A three man CLMRG team started up the Whitney trail with a Kendrick's Extraction device. Due to the difficulty of the terrain and seriousness of the injuries, additional support was requested from MRA. The Sierra Madre SAR Team and Inyo County SAR responded to this request. The Forest Service helicopter was available at 0630 Sunday morning. While this helicopter could deliver rescuers to the top of Whitney, (el. 14495 ft.) it was not configured to carry anyone on a stretcher. Arrangements were made for a CH-45 "Chinook" from the National Guard Unit stationed at Stockton, CA to come in later in the day.

Sunday morning winds at the summit prevented the Forest Service helicopter from landing. The closest landing spot was at Trail Camp some three miles away and two thousand feet below the summit. The ground team that had been walking all night passed through this location an hour and a half before the helicopter landed. Four additional trips were required to get all the personnel and equipment to Trail Camp.

Each team that was flown in immediately

started up the trail while the helicopter went for another load.

When the first MRA team reached Rob and Walker around 1030, the stranded climbers had been joined by four other climbers. These climbers had heard of the accident late Saturday afternoon and tried to reach the accident site with food, water, and sleeping bags. Darkness had delayed them from reaching their goal and they had arrived around 0900 Sunday. One of these climbers was a medical doctor and another was a trauma nurse. They had performed their own medical assessment, and had determined that while Rob would have a sore head and back for a while, there were no significant injuries involved. Rob still needed assistance to reach the top of the mountain. This was provided by attaching two ropes to his climbing harness. One rope was attached to a "Z" raising system. Using this rope, two rescuers could lift Rob's weight while he slowly climbed. The second rope was attached to a belay anchor for safety. Three separate raising systems had to be established before reaching the summit.

The CH-45 was called in when all the ropes, hardware, and people had been collected on the summit. The powerful helicopter created a stinging sand storm as it landed, but it was able to carry the two weary climbers, twelve rescuers, and all their equipment in one flight.

Involved in the rescue operation were: China Lake Mountain Rescue - Bart Hine, Daryl Hinman, Lee Lucas, Bob Huey, Tom Sakai, Dennis Burge, Larry Seibold, Frank Buffum, Phil Wilson, Steve Walker, Nancy Gray, and Sheila Rockwell.

Inyo County Search and Rescue - Doug Wilson, David Jones, Millie Clemo, and Elaine McNeill. Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team - Steve Millenbauch, Miner Harkness, John Innskeep, Bob Howert, Dennis Whalen, and J. Nakagawa.

Cal. Air National Guard (g. Company 140) - CW4 Dewayne Browning, CW4 Kenneth Cowan, SSG Lee Rothrock, and SP4 Rick Hendricks.

Concerned climbers - Sonny Lorrence, M.D., Redlands, CA. Steve Contervan,

# OPERATION REPORTS

Trauma Nurse, Santa Monica, CA. John Roder, Davis, CA. and Al Berger, Davis CA.

**89-16            8/9-10/89  
Cottonwood Canyon**

**Rescue  
Green**

A logistics meeting for our upcoming trip to the Tetons was cut short by a beeper call from the Inyo Sheriffs Office. CLMRG was requested to respond immediately for an injured horseback rider just west of Cottonwood Pass. The RP had stated that her father (George Anderson) had been rolled on by his horse and that he probably had a fractured femur, was in extreme pain and passing in and out of consciousness. Mary Schmierer became the coordinator and was able to get 4 others to commit to the certain all night effort. Bob Huey, Andy Mitchell, Tom Roseman, and Roger Meng met at the but and were on the road by 2215. Four of us started hiking in (Bob and Tom with the stretcher) at 0020. Roger remained at the Cottonwood Pass parking lot for communication. Deputy Randy Geiger met us at the parking lot and stayed there for the duration of the operation. Shortly after 0300 we arrived at the victim's campsite. George was in a tent and had received considerable TLC from his other daughter. She had wrapped his leg with Ace bandages and made sure that he was warm and as comfortable as possible. His pulse and respiration was near normal and he said that he felt much better, and as long as the leg was not moved the pain was tolerable. We had brought the traction splint, but elected not to use it because the helicopter coming in was a CHP Long Ranger which has minimal room for an injured person, let alone a full size traction splint. Instead we decided to apply a full length blow-up splint just before moving him to the helicopter to stabilize the leg and protect it as much as possible. At about 0750 the helicopter arrived and shut down for loading the victim. We already had George splinted and in the stretcher ready to move. The CHP medic reevaluated George's condition and helped us moved him out to the landing zone. At this point the CHP

medic applied a Sager traction splint while George was still in our Stokes. It was felt that the Sager would be better than the inflatable and it would fit in the helicopter. At 0820 the helo left for the Valley Medical Center in Fresno and soon after we packed up and headed out.

Comments: **I** forgot to bring the directional antenna and our communications suffered seriously. We could not talk to base on 155.160. However, the Inyo frequency worked like a champ. We could talk to Control in Independence and to Deputy Geiger at base. The Sager traction splint worked extremely well. It is small, easily carried and fits in our Stokes.

**89-17    9/10-11/89    Search/Recovery  
Great Falls Basin Finco**

In response to a pager call, I was told by the San Bernardino Sheriffs dispatcher that the problem was a search for 33 year old Ronald Vassar. Ronald left his house on 3 Sept., and his abandoned vehicle was found in the parking area at Great Falls Basin. The vehicle had been parked there for at least two days because it was spotted there by a friend of Ronald's on Sept. 7. **I** decided to get a team of four together to quickly rappel the seven waterfalls of Great Falls Basin, since we knew from experience that this was the most likely area for someone to get stuck or possibly injured. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout and got Bob Rockwell, Andrew Mitchell, Paul DeRuiter and Tom Sakai to volunteer. We met at the but at 1700 and left by 1715. We arrived at the parking area of Great Falls Basin at 1800. Deputy Lopsteich from the San Bernardino Sheriff and 7 members of the Searles Valley Fire and Rescue Team were already there. Four members of the Searles team were hiking up the trail that leads to the top of the falls. A thong sandal and cigarettes had been found on the trail. Ronald had left his house wearing thongs and shorts, and the cigarettes matched the brand that Ronald smokes. **I** spoke with one of the members from the Searles team and asked if we could use their people to thoroughly search

# OPERATION REPORTS

the rocks along the trail leading up to the falls. CLMRG could then hike straight up the trail and begin the series of rappels down the falls. Searles Valley agreed to the assignments.

At 1815 Rockwell, Mitchell, DeRuiter, and Sakai, started up the trail. At 1840 the four started to rappel down the first of the falls. About fifteen minutes later a call came on the radio that they had found Ronald's wallet. While we were trying to quiet the other radios in base another call came over the radio that Ronald had been found. The time was 1855. It appeared Ronald had died due to injuries sustained when he fell down the falls. While we waited to get the O.K. from the coroner to move Ronald from where he was found, the members of the Searles team returned to base to pick up the stretcher and ropes that would be required in the lowering, to get Ronald down the remaining falls. The O.K. was given and Ronald was lowered down the four remaining falls to the mouth of the canyon. Everyone was back in base at 2345. After a debrief with the sheriff and the coroner we headed back to Ridgecrest. We arrived home at 0130.

## Comments:

Paul DeRuiter did a good job of sketching where Ronald had fallen, where he had crawled and/or walked, where items were found and finally where Ronald was found. It is important that this be done for fatalities in which the coroner cannot get to the scene.

The Searles Valley Fire and Rescue Team was formed for rescues with Kerr McGee; however they are very interested in becoming more involved in search and rescue in the Trona/San Bernardino County area, so we may be working with them again. I recommend that we follow up with some of the contacts made on this operation to possibly do some joint training together in the Great Falls Basin area.

**8 9 - 1 8 9 / 1 4 / 8 9 A l e r t  
T w i n L a k e s F i n c o**

The pager went off at 0900 on Thursday, 14 Sept. The call was from Sierra Madre

Search and Rescue for a search for an overdue hunter in the Buckeye drainage near Twin Lakes. Temperatures had dropped to 0 degrees the night before and a storm was expected in the next day or two. I spent the next fifteen minutes trying to find a coordinator and finally Mile Renta did the telephoning. Tom Roseman, Loren Castro, and Kit Antonsen committed to go on the search. At 1025 a call came over the pager that the hunter hiked out on his own so the operation was secured.

## Donors

Many thanks to the following who have made recent contributions to CLMRG:

The Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club

Bill Key (see Operation #89-12)

Clark Trowell

## Editor's Corner

Shelia and Bob Rockwell have been editing the Talus Pile for the past five year. I think everyone agrees that they have done an outstanding job. Now they want, and certainly deserve to have, more time for other pursuits. With the cheery phrase that "it's practically no trouble at all", they entrusted me with the future of this publication. Having produced one issue, (with the expert assistance of Lisa Albert, who did the typing) I know that CLMRG owes Shelia and Bob a large debt of gratitude!

If you wish to submit items for publication or letters of opinion, please send them to me: Carol Burge, 1104 N. Inyo, Ridgecrest, CA 93555.

## EXPEDITION: CHINA LAKE "89"

The 1989 CLMRG expedition to the east ridge of Mt. Logan; 10 June to 2 July. Participants were Bart Hine, Daryl Hinman, Chris Ostermann, and Bob Rockwell.

Mt. Logan (19,850 feet) is the highest peak in Canada and the second highest in North America. Located in the St. Elias range of the Yukon Territory; its weather is dictated by conditions in the nearby Gulf of Alaska. Climbers need to be prepared for storms of up to six days duration, 100 mile per hour winds, and snowfalls of several feet.

We selected the east ridge route, for which the past success rate has been about 30%. The lower part consists of 50° - 60° knife-edge snow and ice ridges, with some sections of class three and four rock. Above 13,000 feet the terrain is mainly steep glacier travel. The main attractions to us were that this is a more difficult and challenging route than the normal route, and is far less frequently climbed. Indeed, our team was the only party there this year.

After five months of preparation and training, we finally flew by ski plane to the 6500 foot level on the Hubbard Glacier, about four miles from Logan's east ridge. The whole area was awesome (a word we used repeatedly during the trip), intimidating (also used), immense (ditto): mountains, glaciers, crevasses, snow, rock, ridges, avalanches, etc. Not a speck of green to be seen, nor any wildlife of any kind.

The first two days were spent in ferrying heavy loads from the landing site to the base of the ridge itself. We had a total of 600 pounds of personal and group gear which included 1200 feet of fixed rope, food for 21 days, climbing ropes, and rock and snow/ice hardware.

Then, after three days of route finding and load carrying, we attained the ridge crest at an altitude of 8700 feet.

It took a week to climb the next 4000 vertical feet, making double carries and establishing a total of three camps on the ridge. Our slow progress was due to

hard ice under a thin snow layer for much of the way. We used the fixed lines a lot,

placing pickets and flukes for protection whenever we could. Because of the continual steepness, we never unroped. Our luck ran out when a significant storm hit, stalling us for three days. When we could climb again, the fresh soft snow made our upward progress agonizingly slow. And, where the snow had not accumulated because of the steep snow/ice slopes, we had our familiar hard ice to climb. We made only 650 feet that day.

In assessing our situation, it became clear that even under the best of improving conditions the summit was too far away. We estimated that we could make the summit and return to our highest food cache in about nine days. But we had only five days of food left. We reluctantly elected to descend.

The climb was eventful; see Operation No. 89-11. Also, Daryl and Bob were caught in an avalanche; fortunately it (and us) stopped thirty feet short of a 2000 foot drop. Bart took a long penduluming fall but was stopped by the rope, unhurt. Bob pulled off a basketball-sized rock on his thigh and was laid up for two days. Chris, evidently, led a charmed existence. Finally, after nineteen days on the mountain, we radioed for a pickup and were soon back to civilization.

Notes:

1. While we took tents, we built igloos for most of our camps. All agreed that the advantages of igloos far outweigh the extra time it takes to build them. Especially if storms are expected.
2. We used MSR XGK stoves, with MSR's new heat exchanger cookset, and kept close track of fuel usage: 4.1 oz. per day, per person. A useful figure for winter trip planning.

## Letters

...I wish to express my gratitude for your group's rescue of my son from Chicken Spring Lake on July 19th. He was badly burned, but is recovering nicely and will shortly be home from the hospital. I greatly appreciate your willingness to get out of bed and rush to aid my son in the middle of the night... Bill Key.

...My husband and I and our two sons were on our last night camp out of a six day backpacking trip and decided to camp at Chicken Spring Lake. We became involved in an incident involving a father and his two sons who were camped close to us. The eldest son, evidently in a state of severe depression, had set himself on fire by pouring fuel over himself and igniting it, burning himself quite severely. This occurred at dusk and there wasn't a lot we could do to help except offer a lot of support and help to keep the boy from going into shock and sending the father for help...After this extremely long night with the burn victim, there was the most wonderful sound at about 4:00am, footsteps were heard walking through our camp site and bright orange shirts were spotted, the rescue team had arrived!!! There were not just two or three but seven or eight team members who had hiked all night to get to our 11,200 elevation to help. About a half hour later another incredible sound, the helicopter arrived and after about 4 or 5 passes landed in an area that looked impossible to land in and flew the victim to the hospital. After the helicopter left we had the opportunity to share coffee and cocoa with the rescue team and talk to them. I have to say I have never met such a great group of people, so dedicated, so

sincere, and happy to help. I will always remember them. Without their help a very bad situation would have been much worse. The help and emotional support they gave the victim and his younger brother was tremendous. They are to be complimented!! A

"THANK YOU" just seems so inadequate...Linda Mosley.

## Miscellaneous

### 92-YEAR-OLD ITALIAN BEGINS MT. EVEREST CLIMB

from Reuters

MILAN, Italy - A 92-year-old Italian explorer started to climb Mt. Everest on Sunday, Milan University said. He is the oldest mountaineer to attempt to scale the world's highest peak.

Back in 1954, Professor Ardito Desio was the first to reach the top of the only slightly lower K-2 mountain in Kashmir, which is 28,250 feet high.

"Every time I come back to city life I want to flee, to find a way out among simple people," he told colleagues at Milan University before leaving Italy.

The university's secretariat, which was in contact with Desio's base, said he is leading a 45-person scientific expedition up 29,028 feet Everest.

Asked by the Milan newspaper Corriere della Sera whether the climb would not jeopardize his health, Desio retorted:

"**I'm** in perfectly good health, and a huge enthusiasm is pushing me on. If the weather turns bad, no problem - I'll travel back down again to Katmandu (in Nepal).

(Los Angeles Times)



"Excuse me, but the others sent me up here  
to ask you not to roll around so much."

**THE FAR SIDE**  
By GARY LARSON

"Excuse me, but the others sent me up here  
to ask you not to roll around so much."