

Cross country skier with broken ankle

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Round Valley San Jacinto Mtns
1978-004

By Ed Hill

After a day of cross-country skiing in a storm there is nothing like a 'call-out' back into the same storm. My call captain told me that a skier had broken his ankle in Round Valley and we were meeting at the Palm Springs Tramway. I sorted through my gear and took the driest and left in a rain storm.

Three feet of fresh power snow met us at the mountain station. We snowshoed over to the Long Valley Ranger Station where we were told that the Round Valley ranger was bivouacking with the injured man. The fresh snow made our progress very slow, and it was daylight before we reached Round Valley. We called the ranger and asked him where he was. (Radios are great help in times like these.) He replied to the effect that he really wasn't sure and was in a gully so he couldn't pick out any landmarks.

We left the rescue toboggan in the middle of the meadow and started searching and shouting. One of the teams near the upper end of the valley heard them and we quickly snow-shoed up the proper



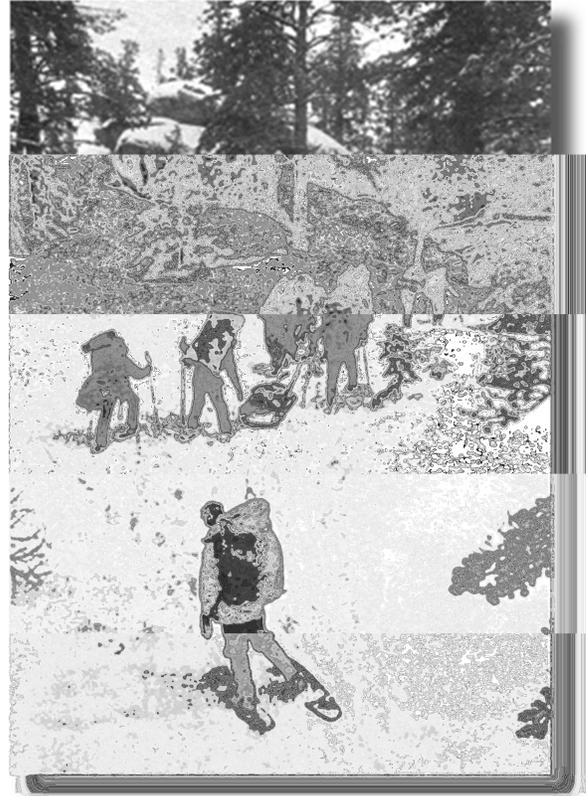
Jim Fairchild

Three feet of fresh snow, darkness, and a continuing storm did not deter RMRU from starting on a mission to aid an injured skier in the backcountry of the San Jacinto Mountains. This photograph was shot in Long Valley, near the upper station of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, as unit members prepared to start snowshoeing towards Round Valley. (L to R) John Muratet, Jim Garvey, Bernie McIlvoy, Carl Miller and Ken Dahike.

gully. The two skiers and the ranger had spent a cold night.

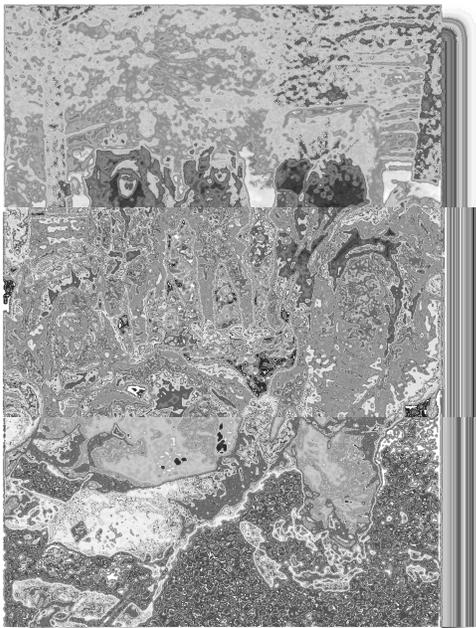
We fired up our stoves and served hot food to all. The weather cleared a bit and we asked for a helicopter for evacuation. While waiting the storm closed in again so we loaded the injured man into the rescue toboggan and pulled him back to the mountain station. This is a trip of over two miles and we had been up all night. (Hard work.)

A report that two brothers were overdue climbing one of the desert ridges reached us as we were finishing this task and the team deployed on the next mission.



Jim Fairchild

Although it is generally downhill from Round Valley to Long Valley, there are short areas that are uphill. This photo was shot as unit members struggled uphill.



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The injured young man was photographed as he was helped into a sleeping bag (and was then secured into the rescue toboggan) in the upper part of Round Valley.

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.