

## Bicyclist airborne on steep drop-off

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De Anza Cycle Park  
1981-028**

By Rick Pohlers

Things have been pretty slow this summer and as a result we have taken to doing urban rescues in areas around Riverside and Corona. So when we got a call to rescue an injured motorcyclist in De Anza Cycle Park, it was about par for the course. Maybe we should call ourselves Riverside Urban Rescue Unit (RURU).

Anyway, the problem was that a biker had made a wrong turn and found himself airborne over a three hundred foot dirt cliff. Guess he made a rough landing, what with broken bones and internal injuries, but at least he survived. The CDF and paramedics were summoned and quickly got things under control, however there was no way to wheel a gurney up, around or through the loose dirt and rocky cliff. So... that is when RMRU was called to the rescue.

Jim Fairchild got there first with the number two van along with his daughter, Carol. They began setting up for a raise while waiting for the rest of the team. Since the 'A' team was out of town on vacation it was up to the "B" team to pull this one off.

'Ace' rock climber Joe "Little Piggy" Erickson was next to arrive and was appointed to go over the side. Other "B" team members dribbled in and assisted in setting things up. Someone had called the Riverside Air Force to shed some light on the project which they did but not without a lot of noise. Once Joe was lowered over the side we set up the mechanical advantage and recruited volunteers to man it from the many CDF and bikers about. The cyclists were a willing lot ready to lend a hand, one hand on the rope and the other on a can of brewski. Meanwhile Joe got the subject buckled up in the litter and put helmets on the crowd that had gone down to the poor guy, including his mother. There were six other people in addition to



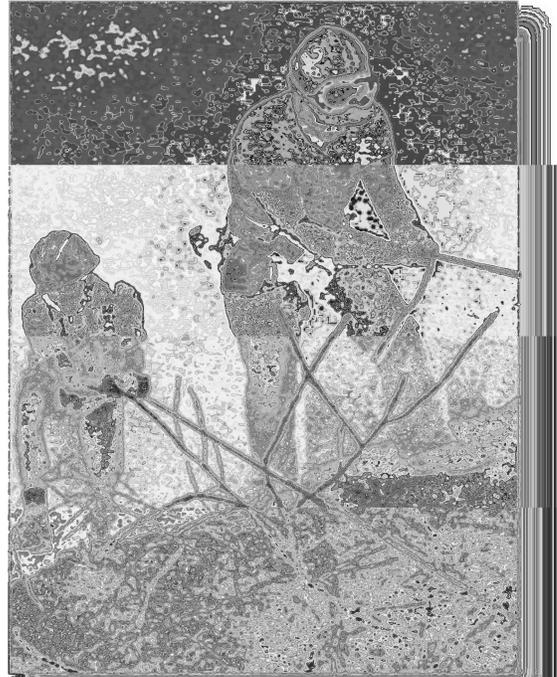
Jim Fairchild

**MECHANICAL ADVANTAGE - RMRU members Rick Pohlers and John Dew set up a M.A. to raise the injured biker and attendant, Joe Erickson, up the near 300 foot dirt cliff.**

the victim to be hauled up. Gee, whatever happened to that power winch we have?

Rock fall was a big problem but Joe managed to dodge most of them. Seems everyone down there was hanging on to the litter for dear life as we hauled it UP, (I thought it seemed a really rough pull for only two people) until they got to an overhang. There we quickly popped Joe and the patient up to waiting ambulance and fire people. Sounds real easy, but what a grunt for brewski swilling bikers pulling on the haul line. Bless their little dirt hearts, without them the "B" team would have been hard pressed. So that left a herd of folks to be lifted up still. About that time Walt "Mr. Bad" Walker shows up along with his lovely wife in their "Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes." He definitely wins the best dressed rescue person award. "Don't get your clothes dirty Walter" ' she said, as he ambled off slipping and sliding in the loose dirt and rock amongst dirty, smelly bikers and rescuers. What a sight! Of course there was Joe in his red swim trunks and Jim with his T-shirt on backwards. Yes siree, real professional looking bunch here.

Under "Mr. Bad's" gruff orders, between snickers, we somehow managed to get the rest of the folks up and wind this spine-tingling mission up. I bet ole "Walter" got it from "Mrs. Bad" when he got home. Those nice shining shoes and fancy duds got a little dirty out there. And he's the guy that says to be prepared to hike when we show up at a mission. Well it's the "A" team's turn next time.



Jim Fairchild

**UP-UP AND AWAY - RMRU member Joe Erickson Jumars up, while the last of the C.D.F. volunteers is hauled up the dirt cliff in the DeAnza Cycle Park.**

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.