

Hiker stranded by exhaustion

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Above Tahquitz Canyon
1985-017

By Kevin Walker

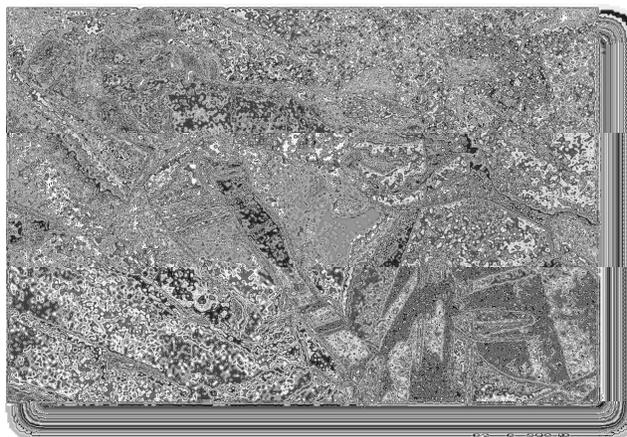
The team was at Joshua Tree for training, but for different work-related problems several of us were back in town when the call came for a hiker stranded because of exhaustion. As news of the call was transferred to the rest of the team in J.T., Walt Walker, Glenn Henderson, John Dew and I responded to Ann Dolly's in Palm Springs. Enroute, Capt. Ray Canova contacted us by radio and asked us to stop at the Banning station. There we met the captain and not long after, informant Obert Kingston. Obert told us that he and his companion, Howard Small, both from, England and here in the U.S. to do the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada (sound familiar?) had become lost in the area of Red Tahquitz. They wandered down hill out of the snow and ultimately became exhausted in dense brush. After resting Obert was able to continue, and made it to Palm Springs. Howard, though, was unable to continue.



Kevin Walker

FLOATING ON AIR - RMRU member Glenn Henderson helps guide the right skid of helicopter 40MC, into position on a boulder above Tahquitz Canyon. Some credit however, must go to pilot Don Landells for getting the skid there.

We went on to Palm Springs, and arriving with us was Don Landells in one of his Bell jet Rangers. Walt assigned Glenn and I to fly search, and try and locate the subject. Once on board we flew to Red Tahquitz where we quickly picked up their prints in the snow leaving the trail and heading in the general direction of Caramba. When we got below snow level, we started sweeping across the escarpment. We flew below Caramba, and as we neared the 7,000 foot level, I spotted smoke in the distance. Sure enough, on the ridge that separates Tahquitz Canyon from the Long Valley drainage, was Howard. Don put us out on a boulder by his camp and then flew off to a nearby helispot where he could land and wait. Howard was feeling better, but was quite glad to have us there. We helped Howard gather his things up, then called Don back in. Once in position we helped Howard in and fastened the seat belts. Don flew Howard out and then returned for us. As we landed, we were met by a disgruntled Mel Krug who just didn't get there fast enough to help. Sorry, Mel. Anyway, Howard and Obert were already talking about moving on. They were sad though to hear that Lisa Carlson had had to be rescued a month earlier. They had been keeping track of her by registers along the way. With everything secure, I headed for home, and the rest of the gang went back to Joshua Tree.



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BUCKLE UP - With exhausted hiker Howard Small on board, RMRU member Glenn Henderson (the right hand in the photo) moves in to assist Howard in buckling up before leaving the one runner helispot and flying back to Palm Springs.

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.