



20 year old girl lost from group

June 30, 1991
Devil's Slide Trail
1991-019

By Henry Negrete

Early afternoon calls are rare, and short ones even more rare, such was the case in the warm afternoon of June 30th. At 3:30 p.m. RMRU was called out by the Sheriff's Office concerning a 20 year old woman who was with her church group for a day hike out of Humber Park. The Devil Slide Trail starts at Humber Park and switch backs for 2.2 miles of relatively steep hiking to Saddle Junction., the "Gateway to the High Country".

The information we had been given was that she had been hiking up the trail with her group and as the steepness of the trail began to have it's effect on the "novice" hikers, they became scattered all along the trail, hiking and stopping at different intervals. She was one of the first to reach Saddle Junction. When the rest of the group reached the junction, all were accounted for but her. This occurred at 8:30 a.m., the group called and called for her with no response. Group leaders hastily searched down nearby trails to no avail.

By the time RMRU was contacted, nearly seven hours had passed since her disappearance. This time element concerned us because the day had been extremely warm and it was unknown is she had carried any water with her. The cool mountain streams which usually flow this time of year were nearly nonexistent because of drought conditions.

RMRU quickly dispatched teams of two different trails leading in and out of the "High Country" to cover any of her possible exits.

Bob Baker and I, both from Idyllwild, took the assignment to cover Devil's Slide Trail. We charged up the trail, trying to cover the open territory as quickly as possible. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up, we ran into a hiker who said, if we were looking for a young woman who was lost, we could find her hiking down with a couple of hikers who had stopped to help her find her way back.

We proceeded up the trail and soon found, as the other hiker had said, the subject who was in good shape. We shared our water with her, which she graciously accepted, radioed into base and escorted her back to the welcome arms of her companions. A while two hours had transpired, and I thought "wouldn't it be nice is

most missions could be so short and with such sweet ending".

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.