

PCT Hiker overdue

**September 24, 2001
Pacific Crest Trail
2001-017**

By Travis Henderson

Midnight. Monday morning. Just moments away from sleep when the familiar sound of my pager brought me back to life. I got out the door in 15 minutes and was soon driving the big van up to Humber Park to search for a PCT Hiker that was 6 hours overdue. When I arrived there was only Darrell Bell, Jim Fairchild and myself. With Jim in the Ops. leader position and Darrell in his usual communication chair there was only one thing for me to do. Hit the trail.



Benjamin Sabraw and Travis Henderson

The subject was 25-year-old Benjamin Sabraw, an experienced hiker that was doing a 40-mile hike on Sunday to complete the PCT trail. He missed this part of the trail a few months ago when he hurt his hip and had to come out for a few days before rejoining his friends at Saddle Junction.

I left Humber at 2:00 a.m. and headed up Devil's slide and over to Little Tahquitz Valley searching the campsites and making more than one group of campers unhappy by my early morning intrusion and yelling. I eventually got to the PCT junction and headed south yelling all the way. About half a mile past the junction I called out and was startled when I heard a response. Another minute and I was to him. It was 4:00 a.m. and he was about four and a half miles from Humber.

When I got to him he had a little fire going and was doing quite well despite having run out of water. I gave him a liter and he was extremely grateful. He told me that he had accidentally taken a few wrong turns and done about 7 extra miles. One of his side trips had even taken him up the peak of Red Tahquitz. Not knowing that he was on the PCT and being totally exhausted he decided it would be a good idea to stop for the night and rest. He told me that in Washington a few weeks ago he had done a 62 mile day but this day was much more difficult.

After putting out his fire we were on the trail and were moving fast. He was feeling much better after getting water. We arrived back at base at 5:45 and by 6:30 we were at the Idyllwild Cafe waiting for them to start serving food.

As well as RMRU personnel, other groups involved in the search were the Desert Search and Rescue Unit and the Hemet Valley Search and Rescue Unit.

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.