

Teenage boy stuck on ledge

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North Mountain, San Jacinto
1985-001

By Kevin Walker

For January it was unusually warm. And for the first mission of 1985 the call came at 2:00 P.M., for a stranded youth upon North Mountain, just north of the city of San Jacinto. We responded to the Gilman Bridge and met with Captain Bill Park and deputies. The informant, a teenager, told us that he and his buddy had gone to hike up to the top of North Mountain. Along the way they encountered difficult terrain, such as dry waterfalls and steep walls all made up of loose rock and dirt. While going around one of the obstacles his friend became stranded on a ledge on the side of the canyon. The informant then climbed on to the top and hiked out the ridge to where he could go back down and call for help. Early responders to the call were fellow members Jim Fairchild, John Dew, and myself, along with Bob Elliot from Hemet Search and Rescue. From what, we were told the fastest way to get back to the stranded youth would be to take a fire control road that runs along the back side of the mountain and then descend down the narrow canyon to where the youth was stuck. Our informant was good at remembering where we needed to go and took us back to where he climbed out.

First off we needed to locate the boy. Bob and I loaded our packs and set out down the treacherous canyon, while John and Jim started readying gear, as more members arrived. We hiked down canyon scrambling over the various obstacles along the way, and after about 20 minutes we made contact with the teen. Only thing



Jim Fairchild

UP ROPE - RMRU members Kevin Walker, Mel Krug (in front), Glenn Henderson and Ray Hussey (hidden) guide the wheeled litter, as it is raised up the very steep hillside of North Mountain. In the litter is injured teenager Bill Evans of San Jacinto.

was, he was not stuck on a ledge, he was now on an extremely steep slope next to a dry waterfall. He yelled to us that his ledge had given way to his weight and he had fallen to the canyon bottom. In doing so he had hurt his foot and leg and complained that his head hurt. After taking his fall he tried to continue up and had become stranded again on the slope where he stood. Bob set up an anchor and I rappelled down, secured the teen to my harness and checked and found what appeared to be a sprained ankle. He was able to move under his own power with assistance so with him in tow I jumared back up to Bob.

By now the troops were in full swing bringing the litter down to us and setting up rigging to do a raise out of the canyon. Bernie McIlvoy, Mel Krug, Rick Pohlers, and Glen Henderson arrived with the litter just as it was dark. Up on the top of a side ridge were Jim, John, Bruce Gahagan, Ray Hussey, and Walt Walker putting the finishing touches on the hauling system. With the teen safely secured in the litter we moved back up canyon. Upon reaching the location where the haul was to be, Mel, Glen, Rick and I stayed with the litter and the rest of the guys went up to the top. After the rope was secured to the litter with wheel underneath, everyone on top started pulling and walking down and we started moving up. Being hooked to one rope with a pulley and safety gibs on top, it was just like riding the tram, only we had to contend with foxtails and rocks. Soon though we were on top, and then a quick wheel out to the top of the mountain and the waiting vehicles. The teen was then driven out to the hospital where he was treated and released. For the rest of us it was putting gear away and driving to Denny's for a late supper and then home.

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.