



## SWAT Team Assist

**April 22, 2002**  
**Shelter, San Jacinto Peak**  
**2002-008**

By Ray Hussey

RMRU was called at 2:30am by the Banning Sheriff Station asking for a two-man RMRU team to meet at the lower tram parking lot at 8:00am.

Several Relatives of a distraught 62-year-old man received a letter notifying them he planned to commit suicide on top of San Jacinto Mountain and that he was bringing two handguns. This scenario triggered the Riverside Sheriff's Office to respond with SWAT team personnel with assistance from RMRU for route finding. The subject was seen on the trams video surveillance cameras, and indeed he was carrying a case consistent with a weapons case.

Logistics were discussed, Jim Fairchild was to be the Operations Leader, and I was to accompany the three-man SWAT team. I was issued a Kevlar vest and I took minimal gear - water, jacket, sit harness, helmet, webbing, and a first-aid kit.

We were airlifted in two at a time to little round valley, bypassing the peak so as not to give away our presence or location. It was an interesting hike up to the peak from little round valley. There were still patches of snow under the trees and the day was cool and clear with the temperature in the mid 30's.

Near the peak we all became acutely aware of our possibly vulnerable position. We hiked with 10 yard spacing so as to not offer an easy target. Several time we hit the deck and took cover only to realize that the noise and or motion was only a stray bird or ground squirrel.

As we approached the shelter hut near the peak we again detected motion and the SWAT team immediately deployed and I took cover. Fortunately, the 62-year-old man was taken without gunfire. He was actually suffering from a drug overdose and 6 different medications were found in his pack. It was imperative that we got the subject to definitive medical care soon.

Star-80, the Sheriff's helicopter, preferred to land in Round Valley so we proceeded to walk the subject down. However, he was extremely ataxic and difficult to hold, so I put my sit harness on him so I could grab something substantial and made him

wear my helmet to protect his head in case he fell.

Star-80 meanwhile had gone back to Hemet-Ryan field and put on the cable hoist. Approximately half way down to round valley Star-80 hoisted the subject up with my sit harness and helmet and flew him to Desert Hospital Psychiatric Unit.

Star-80 then returned to pick up all field members in Round Valley. We all returned to the base by 3:00pm.

Members present: Jim Fairchild, Ray Hussey

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.