



Missing Hiker in Severe Weather

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Mount Baldy
2004-028

by Bill Delo

After the morning briefing Team 10, led by Patrick McCurdy, was assigned to Ice House Canyon Trailhead. We were assigned to monitor the trailhead and show a picture of the missing hiker to people using it to alert them Eugene was missing and we were looking for him. Later that morning we heard over the radio that someone on another team was injured on the north side of Mt. Baldy (the most treacherous side and the side the lost hiker's backpack was found on). The tone of the entire search changed. All efforts were focused on getting the injured rescuer off the mountain safely. Via radio we could hear our Alpine team, (Team 3) Glenn Henderson, Travis Henderson, Dave Webb and Rick Maschek, who were also on the top of Mt. Baldy communicate with the injured rescuer's team. The cloudy and windy conditions prevented the evacuation by helicopter. We could listen to the teams and followed their efforts in getting the injured rescuer off the mountain. I believe there were a total of three teams near the summit and RMRU was one of them. A true sense of pride in RMRU was felt, knowing that some of our best men were there to aid a fallen comrade. We knew that if anyone could get the job done, they could.

At approximately 1400, Team 10 was released. The real action was on the mountain. We returned to the Command Post and met with Jim Fairchild. Given the adverse weather conditions and the real possibility that they couldn't get the injured rescuer out by helicopter, Team 10 could provide additional man power (fresh legs as Jim put it). We responded to Manker Flats and started hiking up the Sierra Hut Trail. We arrived at the Sierra Hut about the same time as the search teams who were coming down the mountain. It didn't look like the helicopter would be able to carry out the mission due to the heavy cloud cover. However, after hovering down canyon for what seemed a long time, there finally was a break in the clouds and the helicopter slowly came up the canyon backwards (I assume to be ready to evacuate immediately if necessary) and it was able to hoist the injured searcher to safety.

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.

