



Male Stuck with nowhere to go

September 16, 2012
Elsinore
2012-034

Written by Carlos Carter

My morning started with a phone call at 12:37 am. Unfortunately I had slept through two text messages at 12:17 and 12:28 am. As Gwenda our call captain encouraged me to wake up and check the text messages I found out that no one was available to go on the mission, at least not yet. I called in to our message line to get more details and found out that our subject was within a quarter of the road but unable to get out. Knowing I had a commitment to take my son on pre-paid event in less than 9 hours I still committed to respond. How hard could it be to find him and help him out only a quarter mile? I called Gwenda back to let her know I would respond but needed to get out by morning. I also found out that Glenn would bring the rescue truck. I was first to arrive on scene with Rob and his wife Kaylean, who is also on our team, arriving next and then Glenn with the team truck full of gear. I had left my house in a hurry so I needed to change from shorts and sandals into full protection clothes because we were going to be climbing down through thick brush. I quickly threw on the leg portions of my hiking pants along with boots, gaiters, harness, a long sleeve rescue shirt, helmet, head lamp and grabbed my pre-packed backpack. Knowing we would be cutting our way down the quickest route to our subject we also grabbed a hatchet and tree cutting device.

With Kaylean running base, Glenn, Rob and I started the slow steep hike down. Within a few minutes the Sheriff's helicopter showed up and lit up the area where the subject was, which confirmed the GPS coordinate that Rob had received earlier. Going down the ridge, the terrain became loose and steeper with no trail to follow. It was extremely dark so Glenn asked the pilot to light up the area below us and see if there was a better route. He told us that if we went into the ravine we would go directly to the subject. So we started our way hacking and slicing the branches in front of us to make a path to squeeze through. Several times we ended up at drop offs and then looked for other ways around. As we continued our way crawling through the small openings in the brush that we made, Glenn noticed that we were in Poison Oak. Yikes! I started asking myself all kinds of questions like: Did I touch my face? Is my body covered? Did I get some on my gloves, clothing or pack? Luckily the

stress of going through the Poison Oak was short as we soon found our subject. He was mid twenties and healthy with no injuries. We evaluated our way back out and only had two options: 1) the way we came through the Poison Oak or 2) up the steep loose terrain. Glenn again contacted the Sheriff's helicopter and requested a hoist out. They agreed but would have to go back and reconfigure the airship for a hoist.

About 20 minutes later the Bauman Screamer Suit was lowered from the helicopter. This suit makes it easy and to hoist a subject out with putting a harness on them. While I was being hoisted up Rob and Glenn prepared the subject to be hoisted up but in the Bauman Screamer Suit. With the subject on board, we were flown a few minutes to a dock area of Lake Elsinore where we landed and let our subject out. An officer was waiting for him and would take care of him from there. I climbed back in the helicopter and was then dropped off back at base where we started. The helicopter then went back down and hoisted Rob and Glenn back to base. Although the mission was a success and the page went out at 4:38 AM that we were done, it was not over for us. We had to deal with clothing, gear and ourselves possibly contaminated with poison oak. Unfortunately, the poison oak showed itself on Glenn several days later.

It was just another night for the Riverside Mtn. Rescue Unit. A special thanks to the airmen for the help hoisting us out and to Kaylean for running base. In closing, I was able to go home and get 2 hours sleep before I took my 10 year old son to his first professional football game which the Chargers won. Go Chargers!

RMRU team members present: Carlos Carter, Glenn Henderson, Kaylean May, and Rob May.

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.