



Injured Horseback Rider

August 28, 2016

Idyllwild Garner Valley Spitler Peak

2016-035

Written by Cameron Dickinson

I was with fellow team member Eric Holden climbing on Tahquitz on the morning August 28th when we received the team notification of a mission. We reached the top of our 2nd pitch of our climb when we received the text, followed by a phone call about a minute or two later from our call captain asking about our availability. Luckily I was able to receive enough signal to call back once I was able to safely anchor myself in place. I called our call captain to get the details of the mission.

It turned out that it was a horseback rider that received injuries from a fall after his horse took a tumble off the Spitler Peak Trail. Eric and I would quickly rappel back down the climb and hike back to our car not long after. Luckily Eric loaded his SAR gear into my car earlier in the morning just in case we did receive a call-out while out climbing. Sure enough, a call went out.

We arrived at the incident command post with Cal Fire, Paramedics, and Riverside Sheriff's already on scene. Team member Lee Arnson had already arrived, followed by Lew Kingman and Gary Farris not long after. The horseback rider was 3 miles up the trail. The extent of his injuries was to his foot with a few other scratches. His horse was upright and conscious, but had no intention of moving at all. The rider would not leave the horse, until it would either walk out under its own will, or get hoisted out. The rider had plenty of water and food with friends and family members with him, as well as a veterinarian which would tend to the horse.

Riverside's HART (Horse and Animal Rescue Team) was in route, and would supply the gear necessary in allowing a helicopter hoist of the horse. Because of weather and other safety concerns, the helicopter would not be available to perform the hoist until the following morning. The rider had decided to stay the night with horse, as well as during hoist the following morning. The next morning the horse was successfully lifted out, and its owner rode out of the canyon with his friends and family to an awaiting paramedic.

RMRU Members Involved: Lee Arnson, Cameron Dickinson, Gary Farris, Eric Holden,

and Lew Kingman.

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.