



Mt. Baldy Search

April 10, 2017
Mt Baldy
2017-020

Written by Eric Holden

Late Sunday night we got an OES callout. Type I searchers needed for a missing hiker on Mt. Baldy. I drove to the Command Post nice and early and was the first searcher to arrive. Our subject was Seuk Kim, better known to all as Sam. Sam is a Mt. Baldy Legend, all that hike there know him. He has summited the mountain over 700 times. It was now Monday Morning and he has been missing since Friday.

As I waited for the sun to rise team from all over California were showing up. We had searchers from Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, Kern, Fresno, and more. From RMRU we had myself and Michael George. Mike would end up on a ropes team searching canyons while I was teamed up with Cave Team member, John. Our assignment was to search from the peak to Dawson Peak, and then to Pine Mt. We would be inserted by Helicopter to the peak.

While we were waiting for the helicopter to land, another SAR team member started having chest pains and ended up collapsing. Luckily, we had 10 searchers waiting to be inserted and it turned out we had two nurses, a doctor, and multiple EMTs. All quickly rushed to provide assistance. With the Helicopter coming in we put together a litter and moved him from the LZ to safety behind some vehicles.

San Bernardino County Fire's Helicopter landed and their medic was quickly able to assess that our fellow SAR brother was having a heart attack. We loaded him into the helicopter and they quickly brought him to the Hospital. Last I heard he was doing well.

Back at the LZ we would have to wait another 90 minutes for the helicopter to refuel and come back. After waiting a while, we got word that our helicopter had been diverted to an active shooting that happened at a local San Bernardino Elementary School. L.A. county would eventually assist with their helicopter to insert all of our teams to the peak.

Originally, we had planned on being airlifted in at 0800, it wasn't until 1300 when we finally were able to start our assignment. We started searching our area to the North of

Mt. Baldy and found the conditions to be extremely icy.



**John on the way to Pine Mt.
Photo by Eric Holden.**

We had to don our crampons and ice axes. We quickly found a single set of fresh tracks leading towards Dawson peak. John and I followed these tracks up Dawson peak and over to Pine Mt. The sun was setting and luckily, we could get a ride back to base from the expert flight skills of San Bernardino's Aviation team who landed on the snowy peak of Pine Mt.



**Summit of Pine Mt.
Photo by Eric Holden.**

Unfortunately, Sam would be found deceased the following day on the North Side of Mt. Baldy. Whoever we were tracking was not Sam. Our thoughts go out to all those that knew him and were inspired by his presence on the mountain. May his spirit rest peacefully on the mountain he loved so dearly.

LA Times Video of Seuk Doo Kim "Sam"[LA Times Video](#)

RMRU Members Involved: Michael George and Eric Holden.

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.