

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 8001M

**5-6 Jan., Sat.-Sun.
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Craig Beasley

Due to lack of snow and an unresolved search, January's usual "winter shake-down" training was converted to a mission. Greg Tanner, whose car had been found in the Idyllwild Visitor's Center parking lot on December 23, 1979, was still missing. With the cooperation of the Sheriff's Office, RMRU's January training became a continuance of the pre-Christmas search for the U.C. Berkeley student. An extensive search (by foot and air) in the vicinity of the Visitor's Center and the Deer Springs trail area on December 23 and December 24 had turned no clues of the missing person's whereabouts. Thus, the plan of action for the weekend was to split RMRU members into four teams, each with specific assignments.

Bernie McIlvoy, Tom Aldrich and Tony Loro made up one team. This team proceeded from Suicide Rock cross-country to Strawberry Cienega trail, then worked their way to the saddle between Marion and Jean peaks and then descended to Little Round Valley, the final meeting place of the four teams. Dave Ezell and Brian Hixson made up the team assigned to search the Seven Pines trail area. Pete Carlson and Chris Noon covered the Marion Mt. trail area while Ed Hill, Jim Garvey and myself searched from Suicide Rock to Deer Springs trail and on to Little Round Valley. All groups arrived at Little Round Valley right at dark, and despite efforts, no sign of Greg Tanner was found.

Sunday morning, six of us hiked up to San Jacinto peak, and once again turned

no sign of the missing person. We descended back to camp and proceeded back to our respective cars (and motorcycles). Several members met at Denny's in Hemet to discuss what had been accomplished. Accomplished, however, is not the most appropriate word, for at the time of this writing, Greg Tanner was still missing.

A special note must be added to make the write-up of January training complete. A special thanks to Walt and Kevin Walker, Rick Pohlers, and Al Andrews for spending the weekend working on the vans so that No. 1 van can be operational in the near future. • RMRU

RESCUE

Mission No. 8002M

**16-17 Jan., Wed.-Thur.
North Face,
Mt. San Jacinto**

By Walt Walker

It was early evening when RMRU received a call from the Banning office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that there was an injured young man on the North Face.

Team members responded to the Banning station and were advised that a member of a three man climbing party was being brought down from Idyllwild, via patrol car, by a deputy sheriff.

Upon questioning the informant we learned that the day prior, one of the three climbers, while ascending some rock on the North Face, had fallen about 50 feet and complained of chest injuries and pain when breathing. The informant continued upward (which was a mistake) going over the Fuller Ridge (slept out overnight), descended down into Pinewood, walked out the Black Mountain road and finally hitchhiked into Idyllwild.

We were just about ready to start towards the Snow Creek roadhead when we were advised that Capt. Canova and Sgt. Weakly, enroute from Palm Desert to Banning, had spotted an orange glow part way up the North Face. Everyone drove out to the Snow Creek turnout. We used binoculars to determine that the campfire was at about the 6500 - 7000 foot level.

Veteran members discussed options available and it was decided that since

daybreak would occur before a ground team could hike up, we would wait for first light and use a helicopter. Don Landells was contacted and he agreed to be at the Snow Creek helispot at 0600.

At 0530 team members got up and quickly readied themselves for the mission. It was decided that Bernie McIlvoy and Walt Walker would go with Don Landells as aerial searchers. (They were also veteran members with experience as climbers and first aiders.) Don arrived promptly and the trio were on their way up the mountain.

Upon reaching the 6000 foot level, a contour search was started and continued up to the summit with negative results. The pattern was reversed back down the mountain with the same results. It was decided to put the informant aboard the chopper and have him direct the flight the same route up as the climbers had gone. Just a few minutes into the second trip, two hikers were spotted descending a ridge at about the 3000 foot level.

Don flew over to them and found a spot where Bernie and Walt could jump as he hovered. They jumped and went over to the pair who indeed were the subjects of the search. The two young climbers were guided to the helispot and Don returned and hovered his Jet Ranger while Bernie and Walt helped the pair aboard for the flight back to base.

Don returned and picked up Bernie and Walt and they all returned to base. After talking to the two climbers, it was learned that after resting overnight the injured young man had felt better and the pair had decided to start hiking down.

The team gear and radios were stored back into the big orange van and a hungry but happy group of RMRU members headed for a breakfast they had missed earlier that morning. • RMRU

From the Editor's desk —

So much for good intentions. The editor takes full responsibility for the delay in the publishing of the newsletter. Due to the heavy load of rescue missions in the following issues, as you will read, I was unable to gather all the write-ups from the team members on time. • RMRU