

Mountain Rescue Recertification Snow and Ice

**March 05, 2016
Mammoth Lakes Ski Area
2016-T03**

Written by Pete Carlson

We drove up to Mammoth on Friday for the annual California Region Mountain Rescue Association recertification, this year was snow and ice. We rotate through Technical Rock and Tracking in other years. We got up Sat morning to some new snow and as we got our assignment for the day it started to snow again. We hiked in about one mile to an area marked with a flag and a number. From there we went uphill several hundred yards to where our problem began.



**Subject in Toboggan ready to go
Photo by Pete Carlson.**

Our subject had a broken leg and was cold. We first got a foam pad under him and then got him covered up from the falling snow. While the first aid people work on the subject, others started setting up snow anchors to be used to lower

the subject down in our toboggan. Two sets of anchors were set up and rigged up for a lower. Next the subject was placed in the toboggan and tied in so he would not fall out during the lower.



Snow Anchor for the Lower
Photo by Pete Carlson.

As we lowered the subject down the snow slope out testers said we had reached point where we needed to raise the toboggan up 10 feet and move it over to continue lowering. So we quickly switch the lower to a raise and did as we had been asked by the testers. Everything went smoothly and we had the subject back on the road below our test area in no time. This part of the test was now done.



Heading Down with Subject
Photo by Pete Carlson.



Last Lower to the Road
Photo by Pete Carlson.

As we hiked back to base we were told to go over to an avalanche test area to find two buried subjects. The subjects were actually large backpacks with transceivers inside. We quickly got into a search line and turned all our

transceivers to search mode and started looking. We found and dug out both backpacks in under 10 minutes. They were both over 2 feet deep in the snow.



RMRU truck under snow
Photo by Eric Holden.

Back at base we met with our testers and found out we got a 17 out of 18 points, we needed 12 to pass. So another great recertification. We headed back to our condo to clean up and relax for the evening and have a good meal. The next morning, we awoke to over 18 inches of new snow covering the ground outside. After a great breakfast cooked for us by Eric we started digging out the vehicles so we good head home.

RMRU Members Involved: Pete Carlson, Kirk Cloyd, Cameron Dickinson, Joe Erickson, Gary Farris, Michael George, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, Kevin Kearns, Rob May, Dana Potts, Frank Snider, and Ray Weden.