

July 2002

Mintcake

*The Newsletter of
Kendal Mountain
Search & Rescue
Team*

Incorporating Ecake, the electronic Newsletter for Kendal Mountain Search & Rescue Team.

Editor's Comments

Thanks to all those who sent in articles for last month's issue. My apologies for it being a rush job. Whilst I'm doing temporary service as editor, (until the next Team AGM) the Newsletter will come out at the end of each month. I will always need dates for the diary but they can be for any time after the publication date. Any dates that I receive for months later than the publication month, will automatically be repeated in each issue, until the date has passed. (Please don't insert too many advance notifications of New Year parties however.)

Exercise write-up contributors please note that it doesn't have to be the exercise organiser who writes in. If you have an opinion on an ex or would like to air a view, send it in and we'll publish it, subject to defamation laws.

Please don't include any unexplained acronyms or abbreviations in your articles. Fonts are Ariel or Ariel Bold. Format is as you see it.

Hopefully the start of a trend, this month sees an article from our Team colleague Les Telford, in his Search & Rescue Dog Association (SARDA) capacity. Over the next few months and years, Les will keep us informed of Kess' progress and I for one, look forward to the review of her first callout.

If anyone feels they can write articles that would be of interest to our readers, please send them along to one of the contact addresses at the end of this issue.

Rob

Team Exercise Notes

Keith and Andy C. provide this month's write-ups.

The Wednesday exercise in May was a two-part affair on 'base & casualty site management'. The objective was to maximise the input of Team members on a call-out by them:

1. Understand the 'why' and 'how' of what occurs at Base
2. Understanding the 'why' and 'how' of what needs to be done at a casualty site (even if no 'injuries').

The first part had Eddie Harrison describing the process from the information gathering phase, through deciding on the response, planning and deployment, monitoring and updating, then to closeout. Useful discussion took place and members come away with a better understanding of what happens in the Control Room. A reminder to the Leader Group to always put a time on pager messages also came out of this session. The second part was a brain-storming session with Keith Pittman considering what the first MR person to arrive at the lost or injured person actually has to do. This developed into considering all the potential tasks to be carried out at a casualty site and how they are best done. Also, how do those subsequently arriving know who is meant to be doing what? An interesting discussion took place on how the 'rescued' views the 'rescuer'; and the responsibility that puts on us.

If you were not at the session, well it was your loss. There is an

opportunity to catch up on when a similar session to the first part is organised for Operational Support in the near future. If anyone is interested in attending this please contact Chris Marsden (015395 60707).

Failing that, make sure you read the notice in the Control Room on 'What to do if first at Base for a call-out' - you do need to know!

Going away for more than a few days? Then please fill in the holiday white board in the Control Room. If it is obvious to the Leader Group that a lot of members are away, back up from other Teams can be arranged very early in a call-out.

KMSRT – TRAINING REPORT FOR JUNE 19TH 2002

Venue – Clough
River – east of Sedbergh

Aims – Introduction to moving water and use of throw lines

Objectives – Practice with throw lines in moving water Live rescues using throw lines

The Group were equipped with wet suits, helmets and throw lines. Swimming up river through pools and jets; multiple rescues and tows were performed by all members of the group Technique taught; the person being rescued on their back with rope under the arm pit helped to raise them higher in the water. Improvements in technique (particularly accuracy and speed) were developed during the course of the evening. Hard won skills in

reasonably chilly conditions with severe midge problems.

KMSRT – TRAINING REPORT FOR JUNE 30TH 2002

Venue-Base. River Lune, Lincoln's Inn Bridge, Broad Raine Weir and Stangerthwaite Weir.

Aims- Risk assessment and management in M.R. – theory.

Risk assessment and management in rescue situations on moving water.

Objectives-

Analysis and examination of Risk Assessment process.

Visit to specific sites of hazardous moving water.

Use of rope for access and protection.

Practice of throw line on moving water.

Analysis of hazardous nature of moving water.

Using the HSE/AALA Five Steps of Risk Assessment the group identified two broad areas of R.A. – a generic and a dynamic. The legal position is that we don't need to perform generic R.A's, but there might be advantages in doing so. The advantages are for efficiency, the scope of what we do and to focus training. There will be elements of good practice identified by having R.A's in place, as well as C.Y.A. , but the problem of where do they sit and who performs them will arise.

More crucial were the dynamic R.A's, and two systems were examined. One looked at consequences and probability, the other at factors affecting the performance of the Team in various scenarios. Both systems produced a score which quantified the degree of risk. It was universally agreed that in all M.R. work risk should be as low as possible, that systems for management and reducing risk be in the forefront at all times.

The training around hazardous water revised some basic principals; absolutely no one tied on to a rope in water – no use of harnesses. Live bait rescues are not the province of KMSRT, specific training and

resources are required for operating at this level. A knife always on hand – the Team knives were not with the throw bags. The throw lines were used in white water and hydraulic situations. Clean rope – no knots at all times. Assessments were made at two locations on the Lune as to how a rescue might be carried out to a trapped kayaker. Practice in using rope to lower from direct belay on steep ground. Examination of new stretcher design and fitting into vehicle.

Conclusions

Training – small groups working on training topics learn more and get more involved. Snippets of revision and new information is more useful in small doses. E.G. the R.A. theory included lifting a stretcher which was revision for past exercises on lifting techniques.

Around water – Reach and Throw; rowing is not an option for the Team unless we have taken the Team

specialists who have their own boats. GO is not an option for the Team – this is the province of trained specialists.

Action plans

Do we have enough buoyancy aids to put the Team near water?

Where are the knives?
Rope = knife.

Throw lines are far too long – 15 metres max.

What do we do about Risk Assessments?

Dates For The Diary

Wednesday 7th August at 19:30

Operations and Membership meeting at the Base.

Sunday 18th August at 09:00

Team training in the Howgills.

Wednesday 21st August at 19:00

Team Training

Sunday 25th August at 10:00 until 16:00

Base Open Day. Contact Liz if you can help all or part of the day.

Wednesday 28th August 19:30 at base.

The next Equipment & Medical Working Group meeting. Everyone welcome.

30th August at 19:45 at base

The next Base & Vehicles Working Group meeting. Everyone welcome.

Saturday 31st August

Bucket rattling day at Westmorland Shopping Centre. Again, speak to Liz if you're able to help.

Wednesday 25th September 19:30 at base.

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

Wednesday 30th October 19:30 at base

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

Wednesday 27th November 19:30 at base

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

Wednesday 11th December 19:30 at base

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

Call-Outs

25th June 2002

A Furness assist in the Cartmell area where a fell-walker had failed to turn up. Six Kendal Team members assisted in the search for a little over five hours. During our time on the ground, nothing was found.

28th July 2002

A Patterdale assist where we were asked to search the head of Kentmere, Long Sleddale, Mosedale and Wet Sleddale for a gentleman, on the Coast-to-coast, reported over due at his night stop in Shap where his luggage had arrived, but he hadn't. Nothing was found during the 5 hours we were searching but he subsequently appeared at his next scheduled stop at Newbiggin on Lune.

It seems he decided to stay somewhere else in Shap but didn't tell anyone (or collect his luggage).

No harm done, but no doubt someone will have a word with him about sticking to agreed schedules, or letting others know when you can't do that.

A nice note from Mrs Lightburn, mum to Elle, whom we recovered from the climbing face on Farleton Knott on one of last month's callouts. She has organised a coffee morning and raised **£565** for the Team.

Parklands Radio

All base operators please note that our Parklands transmitter site is operating on channel one only for the next couple of weeks whilst we get the main set repaired.

All local MRT's have been informed. The local set can operate on all the other channels but has a severely restricted range when compared to Parklands.

General Team News & Comment

The following has been passed on by Andy Dell, from the secretary of LDSAMRA and confirms the report in last month's newsletter.

To all Teams

As you will be aware from the 12 June LDSAMRA meeting the Royal Sun Alliance are not insuring Team members for death due to natural causes. This means that until an alternative insurer is found, members are not covered should they die from natural causes while involved in mountain rescue activities. Although Richard Longman is actively exploring a possible alternative insurer he is anxious to ensure that all members are aware of the current lack of cover. Could you please let your Team members know of this situation.

It would also be worthwhile reminding them that they should check with their own insurers on how being a member of a mountain rescue Team affects their own policies.

Doug Wright

Some timely reminders from Base and Vehicles about things not to do in base. Presented tongue-in-cheek by Keith but seriously meant none the less. (And we've all done it!!)

Myths about Base - No. 1

The cartons of orange juice and the chocolate bars (in the vehicles and kitchen) are not to provide essential supplies for those responding to a call-out. They are however provided for those who are unable to prepare a packed lunch to take on an exercise.

Myths about Base - No. 2a

The 1 litre cartons of long-life milk in the kitchen are to enable an individual member popping into base for a couple of minutes to have a coffee without using powder milk. They are not for use when there are lots of people at base.

Myths about Base - No. 2b & 2c

The long-life milk (see 2a) does not 'go off' for weeks after opening. Also, the next person who pops in to

base will be really keen to empty the remains down the sink, wash the carton out and put it in the rubbish bin.

Repairs and servicing of Team Vehicles is now being done by Lound Road garage, not the Fire Brigade. If you notice a problem with a vehicle, do not approach them direct but contact Trevor Cotton (Vehicle Officer), if Trevor is not available then contact Steve Kelley.

The Chair Store and Photocopier Room were becoming 'no-go' zones beyond their doorways, so they have been tidied up and rearranged. Some items have been put in to the Equipment Room, some dumped! [Including the legs to the team barbeque! Ed] Everyone is requested to try and keep these tidy. Thank you.

Glorious Defeat

It is with sadness tinged with pride that I have to report that Kendal MRT has, yet again, demonstrated it's unswerving solidarity with the Sportsmen and Sportswomen of England.

Yes, we lost the annual cricket match against Langdale and Ambleside MRT. However, this time we took them to the wire and a final score of 114 to 115 goes someway towards conveying the atmosphere in the closing stages of the match where Kendal's entire compliment of spectators and catering staff were on their feet cheering our Team on and hurling the usual level of abuse at L & A. A deserved win by Langdale? Yes it probably was. The Cat showed the origins of his nick-name by demonstrating a degree of agility normally found only in laboratory rats.

But we tried, oh how we tried! The last four batsmen and batswoman, for Kendal did their very best. An athletically re-shaped John Everett was everywhere, Christine Holbry was slogging balls out of the crease

as though they were in never-ending supply, Keith and John Hall batted as never before and John positioned himself at full stretch, halfway down wicket in anticipation of running whether the bowler had bowled or not.

To get to this stage, they had received tremendous support from the rest of the Team (et al), with some outstanding batting and fielding, from Sandy Parker. Followed by Jimmy Clethero and Gareth Davies (late of RAF Leeming MRT, and honorary Kendal Team members). Plus a superb display of how it should be done by Paul Stobbs, Simon's potential future brother in law (and Hon Kendal MRT member)

Next year, we'll have 'em. We just need the rest of the Team's ladies and RAF St Athans to join this years band of stalwarts.

With thanks to Ambleside cricket club for it's hospitality and to Langdale and Ambleside MRT for yet another thoroughly enjoyable match. Next year lads, next year!

Helicopter Winching Strops

You may remember from last month's issue, that there is some concern as to who supplies what when it comes to SAR helicopters and stretcher winching strops which connect the stretcher to the Hi-line. It seems at the moment as though the onus is basically on the MRT's to have this particular piece of kit but we might well find that individual helicopters also carry and deploy their own. As reported in the last issue, Nick Verrall, TL of Langdale Team, has followed up this potential problem with Tom Taylor from Air Sea Rescue Co-ordination Centre, (ARCC) Kinloss, who had the following to say;
Tom writes;

"I have been beavering away this week to find the universal answer -- which is:

That the onus is on the MRT to have the lifting straps/strops for the stretcher. Have fixed up Gannet with slings and maillon for one aircraft and they will get some in the

fairly near future for their other a/c. All the RAF SAR-dedicated Sea Kings carry them.

They carry the 4 super-blue slings (about 1" by 8ft Troll super-blue stitched slings and a maillon). Some stretchers now have special-to-type wire slings, complete with (in-date) test certificate. Check with a flight that they are happy with your slings - before an incident occurs, please.

Suggest that the super-blue slings are conservatively 'lifered' - the RAF teams and flights will replace after a year, maximum, I believe. You need to join the slings at the top with a maillon, so that the weight distribution is properly divided: using a karabiner isn't good practice, but I expect you know all that already.

Spoke to Peter Bell who has made up special-to-type slings, tested to 50 G, that are being tested for approval by the RAF system.

You may wonder why we can't put the onus on the helicopters. The reasons are:

1. There is no guarantee that you will get a dedicated SAR aircraft assigned to your job. It could be a Puma, a Mk4 Sea King or even a Chinook.
2. It will save (sometimes vital) time if you have the slings attached.
3. The helicopter may already have dropped a stretcher off at a hospital with its slings still attached and then tasked to your job.
4. There is a variety of stretcher types and one attachment system may not be flexible enough to cater for all - speak to your friendly winchman and discuss this beforehand, please.

Spoke with winchmen from all the flights who regularly fly in the hills and sure enough, some of them always bring slings down with them - but others don't.

The Scottish MRT's are responsible and attach their slings, apparently. Please don't think this is a 'slope-shoulders and hand the problem on to somebody else' syndrome, we really do think that it is the most foolproof arrangement. Please give me feedback, but only one swear-word per e-mail will be allowed ! Pint for the most

imaginative...

Very best regards from Tom"

From the above, which is still the subject of discussion involving Mike Margesson in his capacity as MRC Equipment Officer, it would seem that some timely communications with Kinloss might be in order, the next time we have a helicopter winging it's way over to us. Thanks go to Nick V for the information. ed

New High Band Radios

A number of MRT's in and around the Lakes, including Kendal, have now tested various makes of high band radios prior to UK mountain rescue migrating to these frequencies. There is no over-all winner so far although one or two teams have just about settled for the Tait 5020 handset. Unfortunately, this model is matched by a vehicle set that would not be so useful to us as it is not fully compatible with the channels being offered by the authorities. The handset itself, also lost in a fair fight against the Icom model when comprehensively tested by SARDA England. Our own team have tested five models of handset and two vehicle sets so far but the Radio Officer will always welcome volunteers to test others. Our last sets have now gone on to Kirkby Stephen for evaluation by them and a new batch arrives in a few weeks. Contact Rob if you fancy a walk up a hill listening to the new radios some week-end. The final version of the new frequency allocation is due to be announced in July/August of next year after the next Parliamentary sitting. Until that time, we have ample opportunity to do our best to get this right.

Team Barbeque

An enjoyable evening was spent by Team members and partners, at Punchbowl House where Eddie and Rob from the KMS&RT Catering Section did the cooking and, for once, the weather was kind to us.

Team web site

After burning copious quantities of midnight oil, Hilary and her friend, Peter Dobson have

begun construction of a Kendal MRT website. The site address is;

www.kendalmrt.org.uk

Please have a look and pass on your comments to Peter and Hil. Any website is only as good as the material it contains so your opinions will be invaluable in it's development. Webmaster is Peter Dobson who can be contacted via the site.

From the Main Committee Meeting, 3rd July 2002

Congratulations are in order to **Steve Woodward** on his being accepted to the role of Provisional Team Member. Steve has already attended his first callout.

The Boss asks all team members are asked to keep a lookout for potential new recruits. We're sadly, none of us getting any younger.

100 Club

1	16	M Kerrigan
2	80	Mrs J Marsden
3	58	Miss E Parkes

Liz reports that the Tebay and Killington services bucket rattling days raised **£996.13** and **£530.65**.

Well done all concerned.

All sub committees are reminded to get their budgets, for 2003, in to Sue ASAP.

A Shaggy Dog Story



Aah!

Once upon a time...

No, not that kind of story. As I'm sure most of you will be aware,, Kess and I are involved with SARDA, the Search and Rescue Dog Association. However, some people might have misunderstood quite what our status is, hence this explanation.

Some brief background information first: SARDA Lakes exists to train air-scenting dogs and their handlers (who have to be members of an MRT) as an additional resource for Lake District MRTs and the police. At present there are ten graded search dog teams (i.e. handler + dog) in the Lakes. But dogs (and handlers!) grow old and retire around the age of 10-12 years (the dogs, stupid), provided their working life is not cut short earlier by illness or injury, so there is an ongoing need for new blood.

But why are they needed at all, you may ask? Put simply, under the sort of conditions when searches often take place (dark and/or bad weather) a trained dog can find a casualty by scent more easily and quickly than a team of humans, especially if the casualty is injured and unable to respond to calls or torches etc. A dog can clear a search area which would require a large number of humans much more quickly, freeing up the non-canines for deployment elsewhere. In addition, though this skill is very rarely required in the Lakes, the dogs are taught to locate buried avalanche victims and to dig them out.

There are currently three stages to complete after the initial

assessment (in which the handler has to demonstrate the dog's basic obedience) before being graded and placed on the callout list.

By the end of Stage 1 the dog has to find a body (one of our volunteer dogsbodies) somewhere on a fellside, bark to indicate a "find", then return to the handler, bark again to confirm the find, then shuttle backwards and forwards to lead the handler to the body.

Stage 2 involves extending the search area up to maybe 2 hours, while also teaching the handler how to ensure that the area has been thoroughly covered, taking account of how the particular dog works (they are individuals, not robots!).

On satisfactory completion of Stage 2 the team moves to Stage 3 which is the formal assessment stage. Dog and handler have to complete a minimum of 8 days of searching, some of which require the team to pass both days of the weekend. In other words, a poor performance on the Sunday will wipe out a pass on the Saturday. Success under assessment leads to the award of the coveted plastic disc.

So, where do Kess and I stand in the great scheme of things? We started training properly in September 2000, only to have all training banned between March and July 2001 because of FMD. Together with a few of the other teams, we moved to Stage 2 at the end of the week-long training course in the Cairngorms in February, when the expectation was that we should begin formal assessment in October. My ankle injury has severely disrupted that schedule, so it remains to be seen how we progress. I hope that we will manage enough at the July and August training course to enable us to perform well at the 4-day assessment in September.

Why do I do it? A combination of loving to see my dog work with such enthusiasm and the knowledge that this is benefiting someone else (potentially even saving a life one day).

Two years (or more) of regular training (one weekend a month and generally one evening a week) in all weathers, only for the dog to miss a body, or to fail to bark, or for the handler to fail to cover all the area - is it worth it? My answer is an unequivocal "yes", even though there are no guarantees of reaching the callout list. The comments that I have received from so many members of the team have certainly helped and I'm extremely grateful for your continued support.

Anyone who would like to help as a body, either for the occasional evening locally or for a weekend somewhere in the Lakes (lots of time to catch up on your reading or sleeping while waiting to be found by a slaving dog), can contact me for further details.

Les Telford

After I received Les' article, Kess undertook an assessment weekend with the following result.

"At the SARDA July training weekend Kess and I were placed on formal assessment and passed the first of the minimum of eight days."

I'm absolutely sure that we all join in congratulating both Kess and Les in their combined achievement.

SARDA handlers put in a huge number of hours in training their dogs, who are subsequently invaluable to us when it comes to searching large areas of ground both quickly and efficiently.

However, handlers and their dogs are, in their own right, as much a team as we are and just as we do, they only function well, together.

I'll bet it's much simpler when there's only the two of them though. Much easier to spot the one not pulling their weight.

News from the Equipment & Medical Working Group...
ROPE LOG UPDATE

Despite the repeated requests for information about the use of any ropes this has **not** been forthcoming. To assist you in this task we have now created a simple form. This you will find in the Equipment room on the notice board inside the door on the left (is that clear enough?). **Please fill it after either an exercise or a callout and leave in the EMWG pigeonhole.**

We shall do the rest.

Dagmar

Your (frustrated) Equipment Officer

Contact Email until next AGM is rob-brookes@supanet.com
or
on 01539 728684
or
Editor's pigeon hole in base

Next Issue :

(End of August)

[Update on the Team website](#)

Future Issues:

[An article from Langdale & Ambleside Team on their new base project.](#)

[An article from RAF Leeming Mountain Rescue Team](#)

[Updates on Kess' progress.](#)