



TEESDALE AND WEARDALE SEARCH AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2013

The Team would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

DUCK

Durham University Charity Kommittee [DUCK] (yes I know it is spelt wrong but that is their name) are our greatest year on year supporter. Every year they organize a 'Three Peak 24 Hour Challenge' on two weekends in June, where on each weekend between two and three minibus loads of students set out on the challenge. In order to succeed they have to climb up and down Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon within 24 hours. Their clock starting when they leave their mini buses to ascend Ben Nevis and stopping when they return on their decent from Snowdon. If this was not enough of a challenge they also have to raise sponsorship which goes to our Team for the pleasure of being able to take part in the Challenge.

This year DUCK also arranged an 'Across Scotland Challenge' where students had to canoe across from the West Coast to the East Coast of Scotland via the Caledonian Canal, again raising sponsorship for our Team in order to be able to do so

The two challenges together raised over £10,000 for the team!



RAF Boulmer

The Team spent Saturday 12th October on a joint exercise with the RAF Search and Rescue Flight and the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) Reserves of the TA, at RAF Boulmer. All participants got to familiarise themselves with each other's equipment and procedures before undertaking a highly successful joint training exercise involving Army Cadets. TWSMRT provided immediate care to the five casualties before the RAF flew them to the mobile medical centre for the army to undertake further "treatment". A great day had by all and an excellent chance to test our multi agency role.

Casualty Care Weekend

Nineteen team members attended their Mountain Rescue Basic Casualty Care course over the weekend of the eighteenth to the twentieth November.

Some had done the course previously, others were new.

This is an extremely intense and stressful weekend of mountain rescue medicine and candidates are pounded with information on all things medical, such as basic anatomy, drugs, medical conditions and trauma.

Practical sessions included blood pressure measurements, injections and critiqued scenarios.

The course is delivered by the teams advanced casualty carers and team members who are full time health professionals.

The course was preparation for team members who were attending the basic casualty care exam and assessment at the beginning of December at Swaledale Mountain Rescue Team's base. Well done to all who took part in what is a stressful day.





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Team History

At one of our Open Days in August I was lucky enough to meet a previous Team member, Ian Cutler. Ian is one of our very first Associate Members with the membership number 007!

Ian has provided me with some very interesting Team history, some of which I've included here. The following is taken from undated articles but most likely from the late 1980's to the early 1990's:

"A rather significant date in the history of Mountain Rescue was 21 December 1988 when the Pan-Am Jumbo Jet exploded and crashed over the Scottish town of Lockerbie. Wreckage was scattered over a wide area and the North East Search and Rescue Association was brought in to search Kielder Forest in Northumberland. From the 27 December 1988 until 8 January 1989, there was an enormous amount of time and effort expended by civilian search teams and their efforts were rewarded by some very important finds as far as the Police were concerned. NESRA (North East Search and Rescue Association) teams spent 669 man-days searching in the Forest and it is a source of some pride in Teesdale to know that our contribution was 177 man-days, or 26% of the total. The search was the longest and biggest ever Mountain Rescue operation and, more importantly, as it turned out, it was to become the largest ever murder hunt. Whilst no one person deserves any more mention than another for the work they did in Kielder, it was rather upsetting to realise that NESRA was in no way mentioned in the New Year's Honours List."

This excerpt relates to Team Funding:

"The funding for TWSMRT is all raised by voluntary donations. Annual costs are in the region of £2000-£3000, most of which is accounted for in running two vehicles. In August 1988, some heartless person put the Team to a great deal of trouble and expense, when the Land Rover Ambulance was stolen, along with its contents of stretchers, radios etc. An appeal was launched in January 1989 for funds for a replacement vehicle and this came to fruition in 1990, when we took delivery of a brand new Land Rover Ambulance."

Another excerpt relates to Team communications:

"In August 1989, we became one of the few teams in the country to be equipped with the new Mountain Rescue radios. Previously, radios were AM and were extremely expensive to replace. However, the Association of Chief Police Officers recommended that all teams be re-equipped with FM sets. One team in the Lake District had already done this before the official decision had been taken. All teams throughout the country have by now got the new sets, but we were extremely grateful to Durham Police to be the first team in the North East to be so equipped"



Ian also kindly sent me this copy of the Team's earlier name and badge.

Ex-Team Members – Keeping in Touch

I'd be very keen to hear from any ex-Team members. It would also lovely to be able to put you in touch with each other and if anybody is interested in that, I am happy to facilitate it.

WAP/TAP

We are extremely pleased to announce that our bids for the two grants from Weardale Action Partnership & Teesdale Action Partnership were successful. We came second in the WAP bid which won us £3000 and first in the TAP bid which resulted in a further £5000. Many thanks to all who managed to get to either of the venues to place a vote.



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Major Incident Training



One of the scenarios that TWSMRT train for is working with other emergency services at either a routine or a major incident. The Team spent the evening of Wednesday 18th September undertaking a short exercise to cover just such a scenario. A military helicopter crashed into the telephone exchange at Barnard Castle and two people had been seen to jump from the aircraft before impact. DDFRS (Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service), NEAS (North East Ambulance Service) and Police were on scene, TWSMRT were asked to assist with steep ground evacuations of two casualties inside the inner cordon. All went well until a third casualty was found and the FRS called for an immediate evacuation of the inner cordon - this saw team members racing out of the cordon with the last casualty.

The exercise went well and allowed team members to learn lessons and practice skills for both working with other emergency services and coordinating team members' work in the dark.



NPSARCOG



The Team's September exercise took the form of a callout from the North Pennines Search and Rescue Co-Ordination Group (SARCOG). They spent the day in Upper Wensleydale looking for missing mountain marathons along with personnel from Kirkby Stephen MRT, CRO, Swaledale MRT, Kendal MRT, Penrith MRT and SARDA Lakes.



Great North Run

The Team members who took part in the GNR did an incredible job and raised a total of £1000 net.





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November Night Exercise

Every year one of the team's exercises is a 'NIGHT EXERCISE' and all 'A' list members must partake in at least one night exercise bi-yearly. The exercise is normally held in November and this year was on the 16th in the High Pennines in the area of Moor House, to the east of Cross Fell and the two Dunn Fells. The scenario was based around a report from an eye witness at Cow Green Reservoir who had seen two Micro-lights colliding which they then lost sight of. The witness stated that the micro-light had been located on a straight line from them towards Great Dunn Fell. The team were mobilised, a control point established, a search plan developed and four search groups deployed. In the meantime enquires revealed that two micro-lights, each with a single pilot, were missing from an airfield in east County Durham.

Although the visibility was extremely poor, the search resulted in both casualties being found. They were treated at the scene and then evacuated from the fell. One was able to walk off with an escort, while the other required a stretcher carry out.

River Searches

The Team canoe group have been particularly busy over the past few weeks. The group was formed many years ago to assist in river searches. They are a mix of full team members and paddlers who attend when we need them. As far as we know we were the first team in the country to have such a group. Early in November they searched the Wear in Durham City for a missing university student. At the end of the month they extended that search from Durham City to Finchale Priory but found no evidence of the missing person. In early December they also assisted us to search for a missing elderly man on the River Tees near Middleton one Row. Just as the light was fading they located a body in the water 4 miles from the village. Team Leader Pete Bell said "The canoe group are a valuable team asset and we hope we can integrate them more into the Team in the coming year".





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TEAM CALL OUTS SEPT - DEC 2013



06/12/13	Search for missing man (see article on page 4)
09.00 30/11/2013	Team canoe group search of River Wear from Durham City to Finchale Abbey in continuing search for missing Durham University student (see article on page 4)
08.50 01/11/2013	The team were called to help search for a missing student from Durham. They spent the day searching the river banks in Durham city. Unfortunately he was not found.
23.40 13/09/13	TWSMRT assisted Durham Police in search for a party of Duke of Edinburgh Award students missing in the Cow Green area. The party were found safe and well by Durham Police
16.00 13/09/13	TWSMRT provided technical assistance to Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service during the rescue of an elderly man from the River Tees



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