



# OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN RESCUE NEWSLETTER

A Volunteer Organization Dedicated to Saving Lives Through Rescue and Mountain Safety Education

APRIL 2002

**The next meeting will be at the Westgate Fire Hall on April 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. Training will be: "Critical Thinking in Rope Rescue" presented by Rick Lipke**

**REPORTS** of Chairman, Officers, Coordinators, and Committees:

### **TREASURER:**

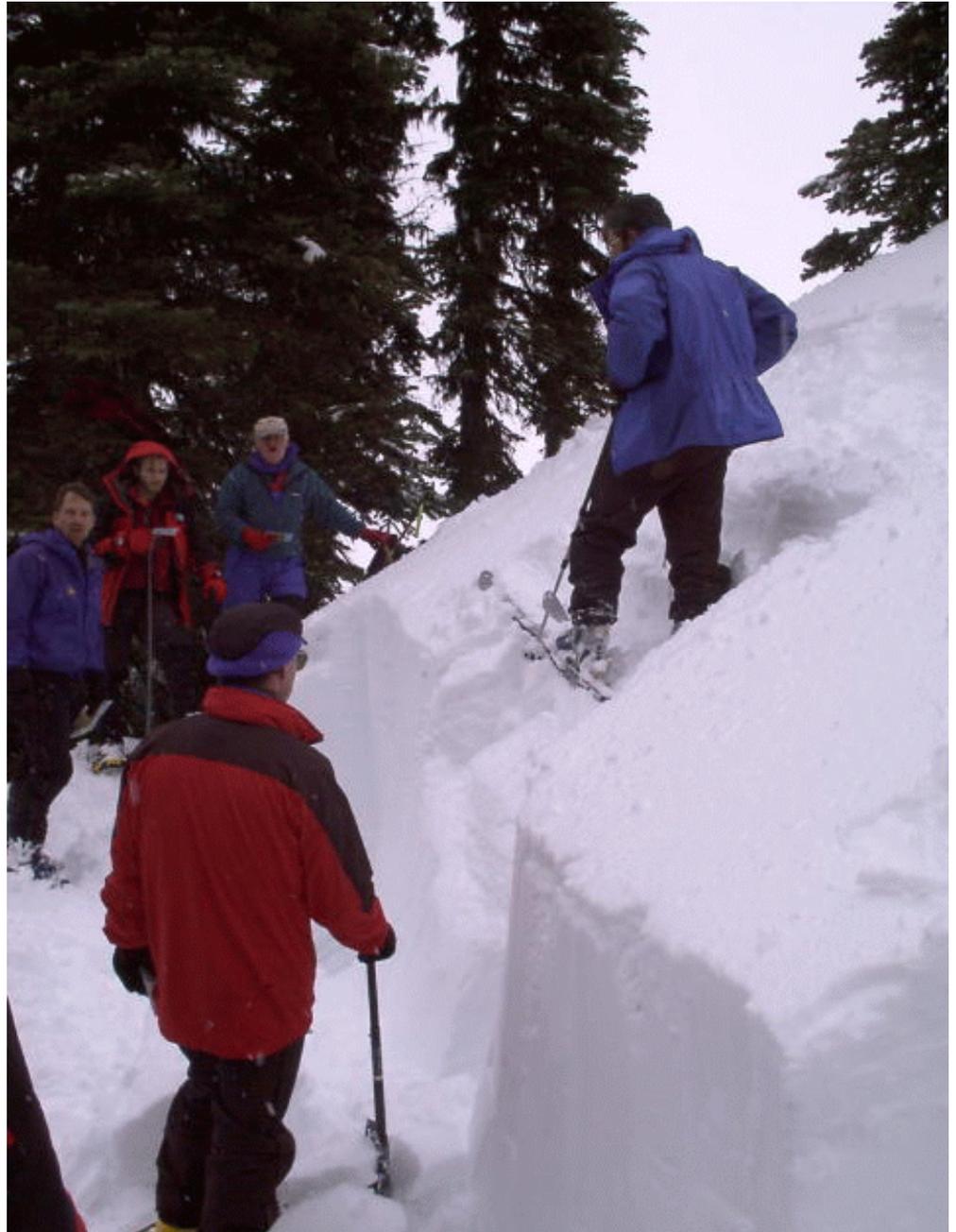
A reminder that annual dues are due by the conclusion of the April meeting. They are \$40 if you have a pager and \$10 if you do not have a pager.

### **TRAINING:**

#### **JUST PAST:**

Seven people participated in rigging training on **March 16<sup>th</sup>** at Cushman Cliffs. Attending were the following: Dale Boyle (training leader), Ann Richey, Debbie Stewart, Duane Stewart, Tom Banks, Andy Graham, and Steve Leslie. It snowed intermittently throughout the day. The snow provided not only minimal discomfort but tremendous beauty as well. The rigging was conducted in accordance with training outline of Rigging 4.2. With such a small group very few iterations were necessary for all participants, to have functioned in all roles, involved in the training. This made it possible to conduct the entire training in the course of one day. One very long, cold and wet day. My thanks to the dedicated participants.

On **March 14<sup>th</sup>** I assisted Paul Gelineau in a Rigging Practical at Vertical World from 7pm to 10pm. Some of the members showed up at 5pm and climbed for a couple hours before the official training started. In



Rutch Block test; SOS Snow training 2002

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training we covered the first couple sections of Rigging 4.2. This training is mandatory for new members to attend before making it to an in-field

rigging for the unit, and encouraged for those who feel they need some extra practice. The training went well and covered the basics of rope handling, knots, prussiking, personal rescue gear and a few other items.



High angle practice in perfect weather conditions

The weekend of March 16-17th Dale Boyle instructed the first of two annual rigging training's at Lk. Cushman. As can be derived from the name, Annual rigging is an annual requirement for mission eligibility and offered twice in the spring. The training has now gone back to two days so members have a longer time to practice and get acquainted with all positions in a low or high angle rope rescue situation. If you didn't make it to Dale's training, the next one will be the weekend of April 20-21st instructed by Paul Gelineau with Greg Barron and myself assisting.

Also a reminder that the April General Membership meeting will start at 6:30 pm to give Rick Lipke enough time to give us a two hour lecture on Critical Thinking in Rope Rescue. We will have a session of Q/A after his lecture and a very short business meeting. For those of you who don't know who Rick is, he is the owner of Conterra, and EMS products supplier for outdoor agencies, rigging instructor for Snohomish Mountain Rescue, writes/co-writes & illustrates books on rope rescue, has been to Rigging for Rescue numerous times, gives lectures on rope rescue, and is involved in

many other areas of EMS and Rescue. **Meeting Training:**

Knot passing was given by Patrick and John. A practical demonstration was conducted. It was very informative and a great refresher. **UPCOMING:** Unit climb: Mt. Washington **Sun. 7th April with Sat. 27th April** as a backup. Contact John Ellsworth. For information.

Annual rigging training will be held at Cushman Cliffs on April 20 and 21. Paul Gelineau will be leading. This is an annual requirement. Attendance is strongly recommended!

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

Todd Loki was voted in by the general membership as rescue support. Todd is also a member of Tacoma Mountain Rescue. He recently relocated to the Kitsap area. OMR welcomes you Todd.

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#### **MISSIONS**

Mission No: 2002-1 (02-0478)  
 Date: March 6  
 Location: White Pass Ski Area, Yakima County  
 Personnel: (Field team) Jim Groh, O.L., Mac MacDowell, Crystal McAuliffe, Ron Jackson.  
 In Town Coordinator) Roger Beckett  
 A call from the State DEM via the

answering service at 00:05 got this first OMR mission for 2002 started on a search for Tony Handy, 19, of Belfair. Beckett contacted DEM and Groh. Groh pages unit members while Beckett contacts the OL's. As none were available, Groh was appointed the OL for the mission. As Tacoma Mtn Rescue was not going to field a team on this mission, the DEM was urgently looking for mountain rescue qualified teams. After the pages and numerous calls from those going and not able to go, the above listed team prepared to depart Bremerton at 0330 with an expected arrival at White Pass for a meeting at 0730 with the SAR Coordinator Jim Hall.

Central and Seattle MR units provide 1 each for searching along with teams of Ski Patrol and snowmobile and county search groups.

From Groh's report:

Tony Handy was snow boarding (Tues 3-5-02) with a couple friends and about 1400 he wanted to find some "powder". The friends had other plans. When it was time to go home Tony did not meet up with friends at lodge. At 1800 the Sheriff is contacted with a missing person report. Handy was wearing typical boarding warm clothing including helmet but no survival gear.

Light snowfall had already started about 1800 and was predicted to increase through the night and Wed. Sheriff wisely choose to assemble a hasty team of ski patrol and snowmobilers to immediately run some containment and search or likely out of bound tracks. Several likely escape routes were quickly ruled out for lack of tracks, luckily one of the highest probability areas (Hell Creek) did yield a single persons tracks that could likely be the missing party. This spot is just east of the "holiday" alpine run near Holiday Cliff. This terrain quickly becomes too difficult for ski or

snowmobile searching and since it was already dark key points were flagged and the decision to resume full search in morning was made.

The morning briefing revealed that Jim Hall intended to put most all of his resources into the Hell Creek area, only using a few other alpine ski patrollers to confirm that no fresh exit tracks existed from the main ski runs. The White pass ski patrol team on snowshoes got off first followed by a Yakima SAR team, followed by OMR/SMRC. The plan was to have the ski patrol follow the foot tracks with the other two teams close behind to be available to set up grid searching or splitting off to pursue other clues.

Weather in the morning was blizzard snowfall with typical moderate temperature. Afternoon saw snow abating but fog and low cloud cover took over. Weather and very tight forest canopy would have made air extraction an unlikely option had it been necessary.

All the Hell Creek teams were traveling on snowshoe, the terrain was not suitable at all for ski travel. The primary seasonal snowpack was consolidated and hard packed but still needed more flotation than boots alone. The 3-6 inch fresh snowfall made for frequent side hill traverse slide outs for those snowshoers with the shorter variety "crampon" spikes. The OL on several occasions added some comedy relief to the slog across the slope, luckily the bruises were only minor and humiliating!

Most of the time the 3 field teams were out of visual range but with regular radio contact we were able to follow the progress of the advance team as we attempted to catch up. I would judge that Tony had made it out at least 60% of the way on his own by the time the advance team reached him. They got him some food and warmed up a bit and then he was able to continue out the rest of the slog with just

minimal assistance. At the find point I heard a remark that it was still another 2 hours to get to the road. snowmobiles were waiting at the unplowed road to shuttle all of us to a snopark where we could then be driven back to the White pass lodge.

We all met a thankful 19 year old and again an eternally grateful father at the snowpark. Jim Hall held a debrief at the snowpark and thanked all the participants. As it turned out OMR played mainly a snowshoe hiking support role, however had more tracks needed to be sorted out or worse yet if a carry out had been needed this could have easily reached epic and overnight proportions.

Jim Groh

The OMR team left White Pass at 1615 and arrived back at Westgate at 2015.

*by Roger Beckett*

Total Personnel: 5

Total Hours: 87

Total Mileage: 374

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### ANY WEEKEND CLIMBING TRIP

Friday night, our gear's all packed, We'll take my rope, you grab your rack, We're going climbing, our fates to dare,

To see which leads will bring a scare. The car is set, it's a good long drive, Just about midnight is when we'll arrive, Signs speed by, reflected light, The oncoming headlights sure are bright.

We're drinking coffee, the music's loud, Bob Marley cranked and singing proud, Wheels are rolling as we speed by, This is the day the

eagle flies.

The road is dark, it's really late, We've finally made it to the trail head gate, We're in luck there's no cars around, We can throw our bags right on the ground.

Lying on our backs, in nests of down We gaze up into the starry crown, Thinking of tomorrow, the adventure begins,

Asleep we fall, our face again.

Up in the morning, damn it's cold, That down was warm, the sunlight's gold, Down some coffee, grab a snack,

The car is locked, shoulder the packs. The hike's not long, the packs are light,

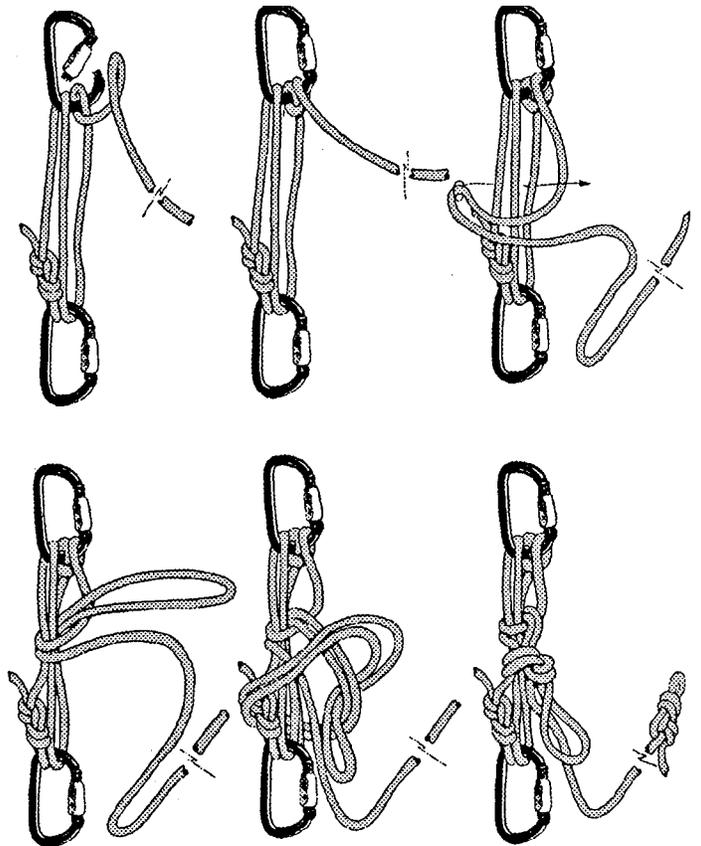
We should be climbing in morning's light I glimpse the cliff, we're approaching fast,

It's just where I left it last.

Drop your pack and I'll drop mine, Damn doesn't that rock look fine,

Here again and we're all alone, It sure feels good to be back home.

*Paul G*



The Radium Release Hitch