



OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN RESCUE NEWSLETTER

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

March 2002

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

REPORTS of Chairman, Officers, Coordinators, and Committees:

TREASURER:

Greetings from your treasurer. It is that time of year to collect the pager and membership dues. The membership dues are \$10.00 per year and this covers your membership in The Mountain Rescue Association (MRA). The pager dues are \$30.00 per year for any members who have an Olympic Mountain Rescue (OMR) pager. My goal is to collect all of the dues at the next two meetings. You can also mail your dues to OMR @ PO Box 4244 Bremerton, WA 98312. The board of OMR will greatly appreciate your due's being paid in a timely manner. Thanks,
Greg Barron, OMR Treasurer

TRAINING:

JUST PAST:

Feb. 7th Rigging Instructors met to hammer out the final version of our rigging training outline and in the process come to a consensus how rigging training should be done in OMR. The discussion was lively to say the least.

Feb. 14th & 15th A very "hands on" Patient Packaging training was held with Dale & Patrick each coordinating one of the two evenings.

❄ ❄ Please see Paul's article on the snow training.

Meeting Training:



Cutting the Rutsch Block - Snow training Feb 02

Patrick & Dale presented a demonstration of splinting and backboarding.

UPCOMING:

April 9th General Membership Meeting **Critical Thinking in Rope**

Rescue" presented by Rick Lipke. This outstanding presentation will be gin at 6:30. Mark your calendar for this earlier start .



Unit Climb - Paula and Cass on Mt. Angeles

Mar 14th Rigging Practical

This training will review/instruct members on the foundation elements of rigging, such as knots, prussiks (both Load and Purcell), proper harness set up for various situations, litter handling and etc. This training is **Mandatory** for new members.

Members who need review or who do not have a functional set of Purcell Prusiks should also attend. Texas prusiks and other such rigs will not be allowed at rigging training.

All members should review the Rigging 4.2 outline to determine if you should attend the Rigging Practical.

Mar 16th & 17th Annual Rigging Training

This annual requirement will be held at Cushman Cliffs and will be lead by Dale Boyle. This is the first of two such trainings. Attendance at both days is necessary to complete the requirement. The option to stay at the staircase Campground with other members and family and friends is available. Please see article on Rigging Training Changes. Dogs are permitted in the campground on a leash but will not be welcome at the rigging training itself.

April 20th & 21st Annual Rigging Training

April 7th (with Saturday the 28th as a contingency date in case of bad weather). We will meet as far up the road toward the trailhead as possible at 8am. We'll be taking route 1A, which is the standard approach. Not only will this be a good "wake up" climb for the legs but the trip will allow members to gain further experience with the features of a mountain that is all too popular from the unit's perspective. We average at least one rescue off this peak every two years. Given that many rescue call-outs are in less than desirable weather, a chance to get the feel for the mountain prior to hitting it in the rain with a rigging kit and a 600 ft rope could prove helpful.

Dogs are welcome but they should be on a lead. Bone Head (aka Chance, or John's big dumb Lab) won't be coming, as last year the final snow chute got pretty steep and with early season snow conditions proved a bit much for a

the old guy. I plan to travel on snow shoes, but skis are welcome. If your interested in playing, call John at 360-779-5382 or e-mail jmellsworth@silverlink.net.

EQUIPMENT:

This will be the second of the two annual rigging trainings and will be lead by Paul Gelineau.

Mt Washington on Sunday April 7th

John Ellsworth will be climbing Mt Washington on Sunday

The garage door where the White Truck is stored needs to be FULLY RAISED when the truck is driven into or out of the garage. The 2-way radio antenna is on top of the gear box and was found broken. This was a result of the door not being fully raised. Use a pusher stick if necessary to prevent the door from hitting the antenna and causing damage. *Mac*

TRUCKS:

The Insurance company has agreed to renew the policy for the trucks but at a substantial increase in cost. The insurance company will require an updated drivers list.

As most of you, who have been attending the meetings, already know we have recently had a lot of work performed on the white truck.

I am glad to say that the transmission works like a champ now. For those who drive the truck, the transmission engages tight with very little pressure on the gas pedal. I did not find this to be a problem, during the snow training weekend.

As we all know, the road to Hurricane Ridge is a long hill. Coupled with snow or ice it can be quite interesting to drive on. Relying only on the brakes will cause them to overheat. This is extremely bad for the brakes. If done excessively, we might have to get the brakes worked on again. I don't have to tell you that would be expensive.

A very simple solution to this problem is to just shift down to a lower gear. The engine itself will act as a brake even while running. This will keep the brakes from overheating, as well as, preventing locking up the wheels on a slick surface. *John Stieber*

MISSIONS

None to report

RIGGING TRAINING CHANGES

Rigging training will have several new aspects this year. First of

all, we are going back to a two day training. This will allow a thorough training, that will hone all the skills we are expecting to use in the field. In the past, some have verbalized a feeling that they have done this many times and are not learning anything. I say to those persons "Great! If you truly know it all, then it is incumbent on you that you assist others less skilled, either by example or by directly assisting them." The ultimate demonstration of the success of our training, would be to have all members so well trained that they could step into any position in a rescue rigging team and perform flawlessly. I think we still have a little way to go to get to that point.

The second point is, that there will be little or no tolerance for persons showing up at training with missing or inadequate equipment. Persons without adequate personal equipment will not be allowed to participate. Time will not be taken from the training to create or scrounge personal gear. Please scan the below list and update as necessary.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Seat harness

Chest harness (Commercially manufactured or properly tied from 1" webbing)

A belly loop that connects seat and Chest harnesses

UIAA approved climbing helmet

Leather palmed gloves

Eye protection

Skin protection (long pant, long sleeve shirt)

Purcell Prusiks

If you don't have, or don't know how to tie a set of Purcell Prusiks, you should attend the Rigging Practical (this practical is **mandatory** for all new members **prior** to attending the regular rigging training)

The third point is that a two day training allows for time to include family, significant others and friends. ONP has indicated they will reserve a portion of the Staircase Campground

for us to use on the night between training days. This would be a great time to sit by the fire and tell tall tales and war stories. I hope that many participants in the training and their fans will join us around the campfire.

SNOW TRAINING

During the weekend of Feb 16 and 17 OMR held Snow Training at Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park. This year we arranged to have Niko Weis from Survival on Snow of Alberta Canada conduct an avalanche seminar. Niko comes to OMR with impeccable credentials as an expert in all avalanche related topics and in fact spends at least seven months on the road conducting similar seminars for outdoor professional groups all over the United States and Canada. He is also the former President of the Canadian Avalanche Association. We first learned of Niko during the June 2001 Mountain Rescue Association Conference at Snoqualmie Pass. A few of us attended his two hour lecture and were so impressed by his presentation we decided to retain him for instruction during our Snow Training.

The seminar began Saturday morning with a substantial amount of time devoted to avalanche beacons, operational theory and their use in the field. The afternoon was occupied by running many exercises locating single and multiple buried beacons. We were all introduced to several beacon search techniques, some proving to be far more efficient in terms of time and effort expended than others commonly accepted and in wide spread use.

After a short break we delved into snow science and proceeded into the field to dig profile pits and look at the difference between several slope aspects. We discussed and examined various techniques for determining the tensile and shear strengths of snow layers. We also learned about the effects of wind on aspect faces and its impact on deposition amounts

and previous layers. We could have continued for several more hours, however, the sun had set and no headlamps were available. Saturday evening about a dozen of the seminar attendees spent the night at the lodge. The evening's training film was "Vertical Limit" and all those viewing it expressed interest in learning the technique of leaping across 300 feet of void space, impacting an adjacent ice cliff and successfully planting your ice tools. We will be holding instruction on this technique next year if we can find a suitable location and an instructor!

Sunday the seminar covered topics involving terrain contribution to potential avalanche conditions, route selection in slide prone environments and safe travel techniques crossing potential slide zones. We split into two groups and dug several profile pits on different aspects where we determined the slid potentials employing different test methods. During the late afternoon we again split into groups and conducted rescue scenarios. Toward the end of the training we were able to assess the avalanche area for personal and team safety, conduct a beacon search, locate and dig out the subject in very quick times. Certainly faster than I was ever able to do during past training's.

Attending this two-day event along with OMR members were O.N.P. rangers and representatives of Snohomish Search and Rescue. The training was, from all the feed back I heard considered outstanding and the type of event we're trying to make far more frequent for the O.M.R. training program. Thanks to all those who attended, to Niko Weis for an outstanding presentation and to Mike Danisiewicz and Dee Renee Erick of O.N.P. for allowing us to use the Hurricane Ridge facility.

Paul Gelineau