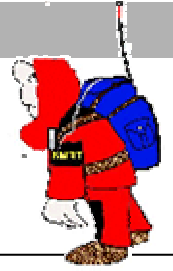


# Mintcake



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Reg. Charity No. 259539

February 2006

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### Saturday 25 February

The first of this year's collections at Asda takes place on the above date. Please contact Liz to let her know when you can help.

### Sunday 26 February

Training will be winter skills/winter navigation so come prepared. If there's no snow, this probably entails the use of large quantities of flour, sugar and rice crispies again.

## Editor's Comment

So the promised hard winter has arrived. The only thing is, it seems to be in Central and Eastern Europe and the North-Eastern United States rather than in the UK. Ah well, the snowdrops and crocuses are appearing. In the interests of being prepared, however, a training session in January was devoted to avalanche awareness and the next Sunday training will be about winter skills and winter navigation. Perhaps those going to Scotland in early March will find some snow? If not, sit back and enjoy spring, though be prepared for a pager to go off as things have been very busy to date in February (see next month's issue for details) after a very quiet spell between mid-November and the end of January. *Ciao.*

**Les**

## 100 Club

The winners of the January 100 Club Draw were:

1st	62	Mr. and Mrs. B. Gray	£10
2nd	40	Mr. J. Swire	£10
3rd	89	Mr. S. Marshall	£5

**Liz Parkes**

## Base Door Security Alarm Code

Note for your diary – Tuesday 28 February 2006. The code to turn the Base security alarm on and off will be changed during the Base & Vehicles Working Group meeting to be held that evening. The new code will be paged out at the same time. If you don't receive the message, or don't have a pager, then phone Base between 20.00 and 21.00 on 28 February and you can get the new code (or you can even come along to the meeting). To help maintain Base security, please do not pass the code to anyone who is not a Team Member.

## Exercise Reports

### Wednesday 11 January – avalanche awareness with Delia

There was a good turnout of team members eagerly awaiting the 'Red Shovel Talk' only to have our hopes immediately dashed by Andy as he announced that he didn't have one (boo...hiss...). "But here's something I prepared earlier instead," he said, and up came some slides to show how things can really go pear-shaped (even for the rescuers) – no, it wasn't a reference to flying helicopters this time. Instead it was showing how the Irish recover cars from the harbour waters. Needless to say, it turns out that not one, but two recovery vehicles also end up in the briny waters.

And so we moved on to avalanches with the strong message that in winter, the potential for things to go wrong is **enormous**, even for the rescuers. We started with some sobering statistics – around 97% of people killed in avalanches die while playing, and of those the highest category by far is snowmobilers (these were North America statistics!). The main reason for the deaths is that most people don't understand the causes of avalanches, and almost all fatal avalanches are slab avalanches. QED – if you understand the cause of avalanches, you can avoid them.

So we went through the contributory factors – weather, terrain, snowpack, and that pesky one, humans. The angle of the slope is significant – the majority of avalanches occurring on slopes between 30° and 45° and at the point of convexity (so it's important to think not only about what slope you're on, but also what's above). The nature of the snowpack is also significant – a weak snowpack usually consists of a strong layer (slab) overlying a weak layer (sugar snow). We were to put both of these to the test later.

Again we came back to the human factor: most killer avalanches are small and human-triggered. Some contributory elements to this include attitude: people sometimes ignore danger signs due to pride, ego and ambition; time: the weekend warrior syndrome (we sat there thinking of the weekends in Scotland where we'd driven that far and so we were going out on those snowy slopes, whatever the weather); blue sky: sunny weather drawing people out too soon after a storm; and the herding instinct: people thinking less in large groups.

Andy went through some good practices on how to avoid avalanche danger, what to consider in choosing a route, and then what to do if you are caught. More statistics – asphyxiation is the cause of most fatalities in avalanches (75%) with trauma only 25%, so if you get to them fast enough, you can save them. If recovered within 15 minutes, chances of survival are 92%, at 35 minutes, survival rate drops to 37%, and after that the success rate is minimal. So realistically it will be your companions who will be digging you out alive, not the rescue teams, and survival is most likely only if you have a transceiver.

One group was therefore dispatched to the police car park and riverside to practise using different avalanche transceivers and then looked for a beacon hidden somewhere in the police car park by Andy Beavon (last seen running in the direction of the river – Andy, running?!). What was more concerning was that despite lots of people swarming all over the police car park waving what looked like small Geiger counters and beeping machines in front of them, absolutely no-one came out to ask us what we were doing! Moral of this session: if you're out in the snow, make sure you're with someone who really knows how to use their transceiver.

Meanwhile, back inside, Andy "Delia" Dell was discovering his creative side, as he led his group through how to make an avalanche. The ingredients for his recipe included bags of sugar, flour, oats and rice crispies (the latter two were as a replacement for mashed potato flakes - remind me not to eat any of Andy's 'mashed potato!'). We were given plastic aprons to put on, the floors had been covered with sheets and Pierre's face turned whiter than the snow we were trying to recreate as he realised how much mess we were all about to make!

In true Blue Peter style, as he said "here's one I made earlier", Andy brought out two boards on which he had glued various different surfaces (acetate, plain board, rough sandpaper, and a rocky surface). I hope he used double-sided sticky tape when he did it!

We started by sprinkling on a coating of granulated sugar, dusted it with the flour (blowing gently to mimic the effect of the wind), and then patted it all down. Next came the layer of rice crispies (making sure they were evenly spread across the whole of the cake, sorry, board). Finally, another layer of flour, patted down once again. At last we were ready to make an avalanche, but all in the name of science we had our slope inclinometer and a man with a clipboard making notes of our results. We slowly tipped the boards, watching the difference between the surfaces when the snow began to slide. The rocks provided an interesting effect, acting like a point release for avalanches, as did the pen we used to mimic the effect of a person going on to a slope which up to that time had held, but as soon as a weakness was exposed the slope gave way and we created an avalanche!

So, although the nearest we got to a red shovel was the red dustpan clearing up the piles of 'snow' (don't worry, Pierre, base was spotless when we'd finished!), it was an extremely informative evening. For copies of Delia's recipe on how to make an avalanche, please send a cheque and SAE to KMSRT...

**Larissa Robson**



## Saturday 28 January 2005 – Search Exercise on a Grand Scale

So, there are 12 runners / walkers missing overnight in the Forest of Bowland area. Bowland-Pennine MRT are running the search, Holme Valley MRT, Bolton MRT, Rossendale & Pendle MRT, SARDA (England [& Kess]) are all there; as (well, it seems like it to me when squashed into the back of a minibus with them) are half of the Lancashire Police force. Not forgetting the 16 of us from Kendal. Vehicles are parked for more than half a mile along the narrow road in the Trough of Bowland (where possibly the MR base with the most attractive location is to be found). As we arrived post-briefing and I was almost immediately dispatched to a search, I can't say much more about the organisation within the control - beyond that they had the unenviable task of managing over 80+ searches, a few dogs and 2 helicopters (Lancs police and the NWAA).

The decision had been made to split all teams up so every group was generally made up of people who were strangers to each other. I know that some groups were a bit thin on experience (Chris Marsden's group of 6 had more than 25 years of MR experience, but 90% of that was donated by Chris himself!), some were held at control for hours (but then that is MR; short period of panic, lot of hanging around, then more panic) and John Everett can now drive Mobile 2 anywhere in the Trough with his eyes closed! (Comments about John normally driving like that are ....)

However I had a good day. My group consisted of 2 from Bowland-Pennine, 2 from Holme Valley, a police inspector and myself. Having been dropped off at the start of our search area, I discovered I was the only first-aider in the group (at which point I remember as we were leaving Busher Walk, Andy had said that this was an exercise rather than a training day, so we were to assume our normal roles); so time to dig out the disposable gloves and the first aid kit. Searching up-hill over heathery bog with the odd ankle-breaking hole and short rock outcrop was fairly pleasant. Additional entertainment was provided by listening to the radio as Control struggled with the loss of their remote relay and having virtually no direct comms with the many hill groups and vehicles that were out. I'm sure Kevin felt it was just like being back in Cumbria when our new system was first introduced.

We were called over to assist Les and his navigator who had found 2 casualties (spotted from Land Rover whilst being taken to start of their area – who needs dogs?). As Les's navigator was an ambulance technician, she dealt with the cardiac arrest (died & evacuated by helicopter) and I took over on the hypothermic casualty (lived & evacuated by Land Rover). Back to our search pattern, intermittently hearing that more casualties were being found. We finish our search by 2 parked-up Land Rovers (belonging to Bolton & Holme Valley teams), we ask Control for a new task and are told to stand by. The urban-based teams clearly don't trust their locals as there were no keys secreted anywhere about the vehicles, so we have to sit out in the cold. An hour later we ask again for the new task and are told to go to a casualty site about a mile away. We get going and half way there are asked to pop back and collect some gear from the vehicles we have just left. 'Where are the keys?' we ask. 'At the casualty site,' we are told. We continue to the casualty site and rather than flog back to the vehicles, then back again, I offer to assist with the first aid. Faced with a profoundly deaf casualty with a suspected fractured femur and possible cervical injury, I am stuck as to how to communicate. After staring at him for 10 seconds (that seemed like 10 minutes) as inspirational thought 'Can you lip-read?', 'Yes' is the reply (thank you, God). Treatment under way and going well when I get a message from the site manager, 'Control were calling all Kendal members about 30 minutes ago to tell them to get back to Control immediately as they are leaving soon.' A brisk walk, assorted radio comms, a bit of waiting around (this is MR after all), lifts in 2 vehicles and I end up being driven back in Trevor's car to Kendal as dusk is falling.

Due to the limited comms I missed the conversation Dr Astle had with control as she was dealing with 3 casualties at the same time, 'I need this gear ..... and an A&E consultant'. Response from control was along the lines of 'We can get you the gear but are right out of A&E consultants, ha-ha'. To which Abby came back with 'No, you aren't, we brought our own.' Subsequently Bill was speedily deployed.

I enjoyed the day. It was good to work closely with members of other teams (if only to identify how well we do things). Also, with the likely joining together of Cumbria and Lancashire constabularies, more working with Bowland-Pennine etc. is a possibility; so occasional days like this are useful. Thanks to Paul for organising.

**Keith Pittman**

## Callouts



The quiet spell – well, alright, the deathly hush – continued but, in a sneak preview of February's action-packed issue, this was the calm before the storm that was February...

## Scottish Training Weekend 2006

Eighteen people have signed up and everyone has paid – thank you! If enough people want to, then we can take Mobile 2 up north. Please contact Paul Astle if interested (min.5, max. 6!).

### Pacerpoles

Many thanks to Heather Rhodes from Pacerpole who started the evening with a demonstration of their highly innovative product – the Pacerpole, a revolution in walking poles and whole body movement. Rather than repeat all the details here, the best thing to do is to go to their website [www.pacerpole.com](http://www.pacerpole.com) and see for yourself. Pacerpoles have donated 3 pairs of poles for team members to use. If anyone wishes to trial a pair with a view to purchasing their own, please contact Paul Astle. There is also a special offer for all team members wishing to buy!

### Shorts

- Ever thought what having a pager says about you? Hill hero? Action person? Not quite, according to the FT Magazine of 12 November 2005, which featured 'technology that's out or never quite made it':  
**The radio pager**  
*This early piece of white-hot mobile technology was the height of connectedness in the mid-1970s. Although destined for the fast-movers – the financiers, surgeons, movers and shakers – the pager went the way of so much technology: started groovy, went sleazy. Even now, popular perception of the typical pager user is drug dealer rather than doctor.*
- Copies of the guidelines for requesting a North West Air Ambulance are on the table in base.
- Thanks to those who have changed to receiving Mintcake via e-mail rather than snail mail. It really saves us money! Anyone else wishing to do so is asked to contact the editor.

### Maps

Do you get annoyed when your route goes off the edge of your map, so you have to carry a second map? Help could be at hand in the form of OS Select: simply type in your postcode, choose your preferred scale (1:25,000 or 1:50,000) and order yourself a highly detailed map of your chosen area. Select your own name and have it delivered folded or rolled, all for £16.99 plus P&P. Go to [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk) and click on OS Select to order.

### Pakistan Earthquake

Hamish gave us a fascinating slide show on his time in Pakistan – there were some sobering pictures of the aftermath of the massive earthquake as well as the more hopeful ones of relief effort, although the reality is that it is still only a drop in the ocean of what is needed out there. Note for your diaries – he will be repeating this slide show on Friday April 7 at base for anyone who wishes to see it. Feel free to invite family and friends.

### Logbooks

Logbooks are due in for review during the first week of April. Please ensure they are in the Training Officer's pigeonhole that week. Please try your best, as it is hard work if they come in dribs and drabs...

### What's On

#### Wednesday 22 February

Equipment evening: 19.00h

#### Saturday 25 February

Collection: Asda

#### Sunday 26 February

Training: Winter skills / winter navigation 9.00h

#### 3-5 March

Winter Training in the Cairngorms. Watch for details in base. Non-returnable deposit will be required.

#### Wednesday 8 March

RACE NIGHT 19.00h

#### Wednesday 22 March

Equipment evening: 19.00h

#### Sunday 26 March

Training: Winter skills / winter navigation OR Base operations / search skills 9.00h

#### Saturday 1 April

Collection: Booths

#### Friday 7 April

Slide show/talk: Pakistan  
Earthquake with Hamish Wilson  
19.30h

#### Saturday 24 June

Collection: Kendal town centre

## The KMSRT Agony Column

**Dear Honor,** My pager went off at 06:01 (yes 6am!) on 30 December whilst I was staying at a 'friend's' house in South Wales but only came up with the message 'Tone Only'. Having read this month's Mintcake I know it wasn't a callout, so could I have picked up a signal from another team's callout (something about Welsh communications?!), or was it someone trying to check up on me (this goes a bit beyond the remit for mentors), or even prevent me from having a full night's sleep with my 'friend'?  
**Anon**

**Dear Anon,** It's so nice to hear that you have a 'friend', my dear! I fear that this may not be the case for very long if your pager goes off at unsocial hours (or, indeed, at those inconvenient 'intimate' moments). I'm afraid that this is all part of the fun of being a team member. I have raised your query with the Pager Officer and he informs me that you are not alone. Several team members have received similar messages, including the Pager Officer himself (though usually at a more appropriate time of day). Where such messages come from is a total mystery to the Pager Officer (as are most things electrical) but he doubts that you were being invited to join a Welsh team. Do they have electricity there now? **Honor**

**Dear Honor,** My word, there are some right "posers" in the team! Yet another photo opportunity – this time in Land Rover Owner International (February 2006). "Mist descends, biting wind gnaws through every layer and the pain in the hiker's shattered leg reaches new levels of agony as he lapses in and out of consciousness." How poetic! **Anon**

**Dear Anon,** I thought it was a good article but perhaps just a little dramatic, as you have pointed out. I must say that PC Dodd looks very youthful next to his geriatric companions! Andy Dell's advice on getting lost was fascinating – "The Three Ds – Distance, Direction and Description". I thought that when applied to team members, the Three Ds were Dehydrated, Disorientated and Despondent. **Honor**

**Dear Honor,** On arriving a little late for Wednesday evening training, I wondered whether the lack of callouts recently had resulted in the team going a bit soft. I saw a number of team members in aprons apparently making some strange concoction from flour and sugar. Needless to say, I slipped quietly away with the feeling that I had walked in on some kind of secret society ceremony. Are we now the Kendal Masonic Soufflé and Risotto Team? **Anon**

**Dear Anon,** I understand that on that particular evening the team was being instructed on the mechanics of avalanches by Andy Dell. Flour and sugar were being sprinkled on sloping boards with various surface textures in order to study the contribution of surface, slope and snowpack formation in avalanches. Be sure not to miss the next Wednesday evening training when we hope to have a lecture by Ken Woodmixer about how we can use bacon, eggs and a light mashed potato topping to simulate the effects of a fall from Raven Crag. **Honor**

**Dear Honor,** Did I hear that Bill Malone had got some new kit? Surely this can't be right! How could he possibly afford new kit on a paltry index-linked NHS consultant's pension? **Anon**

**Dear Anon,** I do believe it's true. A little of the kit which was passed on to him by Robert Baden-Powell (and as advertised in the first edition of Scouting for Boys) has now been retired – well, actually it finally fell to bits! I'm told that intense hunting through the reject stock of Kendal's charity shops has resulted in one or two great finds for Bill and he is now putting the kit into service on the hill. Bill hopes that his new acquisitions will keep him going for another 40 years or so. **Honor**

**Honor Corlowtt**

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