

# Mintcake



May 2003

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Registered Charity No 259539

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## Editor's Comments

Still struggling with wrong dates, entirely my own fault this time.

Callouts reported last month, of course, occurred in April and not May as printed. Due to me doing a global date change converting the the old issue to the new one, and forgetting to reset the "callouts" column

Congratulations to John Hall and his team, on their success in the Keswick to Barrow. Special mention goes to my mate Alan Blackburn, who stood in for me. Al's a serious climber and caver rather than a walker but even injured, he finished the walk. It can't have done him much harm as he's away climbing in Scotland at the moment.

In the case of the K2B (to paraphrase)

It's not the taking part that counts, it's the finishing"

Peter Dobson, Team Webmaster, has updated the website where he has been advised of problems. An application form for membership of the Team is now on the site and some details are requested of people making membership enquiries. This is so that we can at least answer them!!

A reminiscences article from Ray Green this month. Let's have a few more like this. I'm sure there are others with stories to tell. (Ray has too much on me to encourage any more from him!!) One thing I can vouch for, 'Excocet' it might be but when you're in deep water and in danger of floating off down-stream, you need someone with a throw-line, and they don't come more accurate than Ray even if he does have a habit of 'sighting' right between your eyes!

By the next issue, I will have been 'temporary' Mintcake editor for a full year. Once again, very many thanks to all those who've not only contributed but contributed on a regular basis to enable me to get an issue out. I hope you've all enjoyed the year's efforts. This and last years issues of Mintcake, are available singularly or en masse, from the web site.

Regards to all, Rob

## Exercise Reports

**Wednesday May 21st**, Damp but not despondent! I think that about covers it. The mist, clag and associated drizzle seemed to get evermore misty, claggy and drizzly as we headed, pessimistically, to Lindale Slabs for an evening concentrating on steep ground rescue techniques.

But as ever fortune favours the brave. We were soon happily hurling unsuspecting victims down the slippery crag and valiantly rescuing them.

The brief was quite simple, to safely secure and lower a cragfast victim from halfway up the slabs. Two teams of six worked on the problem guided expertly by the men that know about these sort of things, the Andy's, Dell and Beavon and Pete Munford - thanks folks.

And isn't amazing how varied can be the solutions to the same problem! Each team rigged a system that was safe, straight forward and achieved the desired result. As the exercise went on we honed these techniques into ever more elegant and effective systems.

### I think the main points learned were:

To concentrate on securing the casualty ASAP by any method. Think about getting them out at your leisure.

In the team rescue (rather than climbing self rescue) situation, to be lowered rather than abseil. Both hands are then free to subdue & truss up the casualty.

Once the casualty is secure don't be afraid to use all the time equipment and people available.

### Dan Shiels, Kendal MRT

### John Hall's 'pager message mini-saga'

The following four messages was sent to all team pagers over a mere 20 minute period on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May:

"KENDRICK TRACTION FLINT ON APPROVAL FOR 10 DAYS ATTEND SPACE SUN 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY FOR DEMO JOHN HALL"

"SPLINT NOT FLINT AND BASE NOT SPACE JOHN HALL"

"TRACTION SPLINT DEMO 19:30 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY JOHN HALL"

"SPLINT DEMO AT BASE 19:30 HOURS 04/05"

All this from the man that many team members are prepared to let loose, with pieces of metal, inside their mouths.

However, the message worked and a number of people turned up at space to try the flint out. The splint consists of a collapsible tent pole, three 'frac' straps, a waist belt, a foot strap and a couple of bits of moulded plastic; that all fits into a bag the size of a small bum-bag. Initial cynicism gave way to being very impressed! It was easy to use, fits all sizes,

gave adequate traction that could be applied in a controlled manner and would easily fit into the splinting bag. Thought is now being given to purchasing two (about £150 each) and retiring the Hare and Sager traction splints.

**Keith Pittman**

**Kendal MRT**

Indeed, this has now happened - Ed

## Dates For The Diary

### Monday 9th June

Outer door Code Change, to be announced by pager

### Wednesday June 18th

Training - BaseOps / Cas site control

### Wednesday June 25<sup>th</sup>

Equipment and Medical

### Wednesday June 25<sup>th</sup>

LDSAMRA Committee Meeting, Kendal Base, 19:30

### Saturday 28th June

Killington Services Collection Day

### Sunday June 29th

Training - Buckbarrow LWR

### Saturday 5th July

**Base Cleanup Day! 09:00 until 12 noon**

**Everyone welcome.**

**The more who come, the quicker it's done**

### Wednesday July 16th

Training - Base Ops / Cas control

### Saturday 26th July

Killington Services Collection Day

### Sunday July 30th

Training - Cautley

### Wednesday July 30<sup>th</sup>

Equipment and Medical

### Saturday 21st August

Westmorland Shopping Centre Collection

### Friday 29th August

**The Team Annual Dinner.**

Details will come from Simon ASAP

### Saturday 1st November

Morrison's Supermarket Collection

## Callouts



### Friday May 30th

Not sure if this was a callout or not. Although Ill Bell is on our patch, it was Langdale who received the call from the police. However, as it was during the day on a weekday, Langdale would have turned out to help us anyway. No doubt someone knows the answer on that one. Either way seven Kendal Team members attended a call to help a young lad who had almost completely severed a finger. He was treated at scene by L & A and evacuated by RAF helicopter from Boulmer. We understand that the finger will be saved but have no other details.



## General Team News & Comment

The following website has been sent in by Nick Verrall, Team Leader of Langdale MRT. The email accompanying it asks anyone visiting the site to carry out the instructions found there and then explain how it does it. It's quite safe for all the family and I can't work it out. Any budding Carol Vorderman's out there care to enlighten us??

<http://mr-31238.mr.valuehost.co.uk/assets/Flash/psychic.swf>

### Saturday May 10th

Saw four Team members doing their bit for local public relations when we were asked, at very short notice, to supply first aid cover for a horse riding event where the organisers had been let down by the non-appearance of a private ambulance. It's not normally Team policy to provide this sort of cover as it's well on the edge of our MR insurance agreement. However, without our help, the event could not take place and we are not going to say no under those sort of circumstances. A warm sunny day spent lounging around on the grass. No first aid to do and a reasonably early finish. Lots of brownie points however as the missing ambulance turned up just as most of the events were concluding. Not very well received, as you might imagine and not very happy, as the organisers have donated their fee to MR. That pays for the new splints mentioned above.

## Rose White wins J M Redshaw Cup for Kendal Mountain Search & Rescue.

The Keswick 2 Barrow Team left Base at 4.45am on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May for the pilgrimage from Keswick to Barrow. Driven to the start by our photographer Keith Pittman.

At 6am the gun fired and we were off, in my case to a flying start, landing outstretched on tarmac. Keith caught this on his camera, showing a Zola Budd style trip from someone running for the Royal Navy. Not that I would wish to take on the Royal Navy. Anyhow, I did get on camera.

We started with a full team of ten. For each person finishing, the team gets twenty points, making a total of 200 points. So with a full team we had a good chance of getting maximum points. The final position is determined by the time of your last team member.

Our first person to finish was Roger Wilkins in 5 hours 42 minutes, followed 18 minutes later by myself, and then Rose White with a time of 6 hours 35 minutes.

Rose was the first female to finish, and was presented with the J M Redshaw cup.

Upon presentation a silver shield had been added, engraved with Rose's name and "Kendal Mountain Search & Rescue".

If the rest of our team had come in with Paul Astle, we would also have won the L Redshaw cup, awarded for the best team performance.

Our last person home was Alan Blackburn who suffered from ankle problems, and in spite of being advised by first aiders to pull out at 26 miles went on to finish. So a big thank you to AI, who continued enabling the team to get the

maximum 200 points and to finish in eighth place. 126 teams completed.

Of the 830 who started, 158 didn't complete the course.

Sincere thanks go to Paul Astle, Rod Berry, Alan Blackburn, Brian Hake, Kevin Knowles, Andy Myall, Keith Pittman, Simon Rose, Rose White, Roger Wilkins.

A Free drink, meal, massage, and **first aid**. It's got to be worth it.

Not to mention a cheque for the Kendal Mountain Search & Rescue Team which we will collect in the Autumn (last year we received £400).

Anyone in the team who is mad enough to enter into next year's K2B please contact me to be included in the K2B team list.

### John Hall, Kendal MRT

P.S. I wasn't intending on entering a team for 2004, but was met by such enthusiasm after the event that I have decided to carry on with the job.

P.P.S. Rob and Steve, we missed you and want you again for 2004 please.

P.P. P.S. **The pie, mushy peas and gravy were really great.**



Kendal Mountain Rescue, Keswick, to Barrow Team, 2003

**And now to one of those things that you just know in your heart is going to turn into an annual event whether you like it or not!**

### Help Please

Personality Of The Year is an occasional, 'annual', award to identify those associated with the Team who have done either 'good works' or 'something silly'. It will be some time before the next Personality Of The Year awards, but nominations are wanted all year round. Full details, or the merest snippet will do; the name of the ~~snitch~~ nominator will be kept confidential.

**Please let Keith Pittman know of nominations.**

**And from our, not so tame, anonymous contributor, Barbellate;**

### Medals and Broken Legs

Fellow team-member Maecenas has now explained the delay in awarding the Queen's Jubilee Medal to long-standing mountain rescue team members. It appears that rather than use any old metal (or indeed melted down cannons from the Crimean) the medal will be made from de-commissioned Bell Stretchers. They will be stamped from the square section frames of stretchers that have been used for at least 10 call-outs. For members with up to 15 years service it will be from the stainless steel models. For those longer in the MR-tooth it will be from the earlier mild steel models, but with a nice new coat of blue paint. The ribbon will be two-coloured (red and blue) with a miniature plastic buckle used to attach the medal (the metal buckle option was considered too fiddly to use). As you are probably aware, other emergency services received their medals last year at a number of full dress uniform events around the country. The awarding of medals to Kendal members will take place at the team dinner on 29<sup>th</sup> August this year. However muddy boots and damp waterproofs are hardly suitable wear for such an auspicious event, so it has been decided that a symbol of MR equipment (in the form of the removable head guard from a Mk 1 Bell) will be briefly and solemnly placed on the head of each to recipient as they receive their award. It has not been decided what invocation will be used: it may be short such as 'Damnare aqua', or a much longer one like 'In VW we travel, but in Land Rover we trust'. Maecenas says any suggestions would be welcome; please send your ideas to the Editor for publication.

Enough of this talk about awards, let's get onto practicalities. Following tales coming back about the successful involvement of numerous Casualty Union members (with a multitude of injuries) on a recent training exercise, I was tempted to have another look at the 1939 edition of The St. John Ambulance Association's 'First Aid To The Injured' to see how the tibia injury would have been dealt with. I was glad I did as it demonstrated how good-design techniques are able to improve on time-proven effective systems of treatment. For a lower-leg fracture the 1939 (and if I recollect correctly, still being used in the 1960's) treatment using two wooden splints and five triangular bandages provided fast and secure treatment (albeit painful with no analgesia!). The Team has progressed through the 'Thomas Leg Iron' (o.k., maybe not that simple a system), inflatable ('Jet') splints, then box splints, onto our current vacuum splints. All good bits of kit, but nice to know that we could always fall back on the old wood and calico if we had to improvise. As the latest LDSAMRA Mountain Accidents report shows that lower leg and ankle injuries accounted for 40% of all injuries dealt with by the teams in 2002, we may have to if we have a puncture!

**'Barbellate'**

## Memories of Members of a Rescue Team

I have been pondering the most abiding memories of my Time in the Team. Not as in 'doing time', although some all night searches in the rain and sleet have felt like a long sentence, hard labour. I realise my deepest memories are the fun and richness of sharing moments of really living with the many characters who have graced and disgraced the rolling years. There has been pathos, tragedy, ...-aching laughter and fun.

Let me share a few of these, in no particular order- The memory of being so competitively involved in the annual 'war' with L and A, euphemistically called a 'cricket match', that I couldn't thoroughly enjoy the tragi-comedy of John Hall single-handedly beating his own team by entering both the Guinness Book of Records and Wisden by bowling the longest and highest-scoring over of wides in the whole history of cricket. I seem to remember John was top-scorer for L and A. When we challenged him with, 'We thought you were in the same year at a local Public school as Will Carling and pushed him hard at sport?!'.

John explained 'Apart from the school sport of being '.....ed', I played the violin (or was it the tuba?) in my spare time'.

In the days of mentor-less provisionals, often called 'the dark ages', me, Tony Cousins and Eammon Molloy were playing snow-balls on some summit when we should have been seriously exercising to gain our places in the Team, and a mis-directed, hard-packed snow-ball hit our ex-SAS Team Leader, Charlie, behind the left ear. He was already angry as he had just discovered that his beloved, beautiful and nubile young daughter was secretly going out with Si Barber. (That's another story, one that Mills and Boon couldn't better, with love winning through against adversity and long-odds, including Charlie. I do hope you are still joyously married Si, as I do like a happy ending.) So his anger joined all that 'programmed to kill' training and viciously turned on the perpetrator. Fortunately for us culprits we were rescued by a hiding flurry of spin-drift; also by us subtly suggesting that it was Keith who threw it.

In the days when Rob Brookes was definitely 'ops support', and, along with not 'doing up, midges and 'veggiburgers' for L and A's vegetarian Team Members, he 'definitely didn't do rain'. As an aside, I keep meaning to get the definitive answer on how Rob and Eddie convinced the L and A that the barbecued meat they were eating was in fact vegetables! As a result, the feeling is we may have lost the battle of the cricket match, but won the war. But surely it is a somewhat pyrrhic victory unless L and A know they fouled the temples of their sweet, pure bodies by eating gross red meat? To return to Rob, he definitely didn't do rain, and certainly didn't do rain at night, on a call-out in the Howgills, when his specs left him almost as blind as a bat, but no-where near as silent.

The twin-furrowed, walled access track was now a water-course for the rain running-off the fell. Rob attached himself to me with the umbilical cord of a sling. My role was to call out the hazards, which for two little short-arses like Rob and me were legion and of tank-trap dimensions:- 'puddle', 'large rock', 'deep puddle', 'a few strokes of front-crawl-bottomless-pit-type puddle'. Rob talked the whole time, except when he was actually under the water, 'not waving but drowning', which was a bit of a respite for me but must have felt a horrendous way to die for Rob, wet, blindly, silently.

I keep finding Rob in deep-water on exercises, when either I try to Exocet him with a throw-line bag^which knocks him almost unconscious, or grip him vice-like between my legs and swim on my back to the river bank, trying to keep his head below, I mean above, the water. He has this dreamy, far-away look on his face, as though accessing some old, very pleasant memory. I don't ask!

More recently, at the last Sunday Exercise de-brief at Base, Team-Leader Andy was congratulating the provisionals, Kev, George and Peter for being very technically competent, 'the best since Tony Cousins, Ray and Eamon, back in the last century'.

No, he didn't say the latter; but I know he would have done if he had reflected a little longer. But he also didn't mention that, while reviewing our rope system on the Humphrey Head cliff and leaning back on the live rope, a metre from the drop, one of the later-lauded 'very technically competent provisionals' suddenly released some slack and almost shot our TL to a premature end, being saved by the quick hands of Paul and Chris. It could have been THE GREATEST claim to fame by a provisional, wiping out the Team Leader. But we did laugh like drains, and not just at Andy's near early demise. Such actions come to have mythical status in the Team.

I cannot think of any Team member, of the highest competence, who hasn't at some time 'screwed up'. The definition of a 'good mountaineer' is 'an old mountaineer', but also, if he or she has been playing our serious game for many years, is also 'a lucky mountaineer'.

I for one have been very privileged to have had the fun and richness of moments like I have described, of really living these times with the many characters who have graced and disgraced the rolling years. To all of you, my deepest thanks.

**Ray Green-  
Kendal MRT  
May 2003**

## Working Group News

### Base and Vehicles

As it's an important announcement, John Everett's message regarding the Gatesgarth Pass Traffic Order, has been repeated in this month's issue. All drivers please take note - Ed

### GATESGARTH PASS EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (ETRO)

As issued by Lake District National Park Authority March 2003.

As of May 4th 2003 when the present order expires, this new order comes into force.

The new ETRO prohibits the use of all mechanically propelled vehicles, horse drawn carriages and horse riders from using the Gatesgarth Pass between Brownhowe Bottom and Mardale Head, this is to prevent damage to the newly repaired road thus giving it time to consolidate, at the same time allowing the wild life and flora and fauna to re-establish. This order will last for no longer than 18 months but will be reviewed after 6 months.

To ensure this ETRO is adhered to gates at both ends of the pass will be locked. As an emergency service we have legal access to the pass. The Lake District National Park Authority will supply us with the appropriate combination lock numbers on a regular basis, it is proposed the combination will be changed every month and sent direct to me at base. Each vehicle will have the current code on a laminated card inserted in the tax disc holder located in the bottom left hand corner of the windscreen and should they get misplaced the codes will also be kept in the control room. I have also assured the LDNPA that these codes will be kept to ourselves and not made public.

The full details of this ETRO can be found on the notice board at base.

**John Everett, Vehicle officer**

### Base outer door code change

Monday 9th June, you will receive a pager message advising you of the new door code for entry to the base. No other codes are changing at this time.

**Steve Kelley, Deputy Team Leader**

### Equipment and Medical

### Communications

The political wheelings and dealings continue to take up a lot of time. It now seems as though the original Home Office announcement that Mountain Rescue would lose its current low band channels in 2009, has been revised. The new date is 2004, that's March 2004. This now doesn't give us a lot of time to get our act into gear and change our entire infrastructure. When you consider this against the fact that not only are we the last UK MR region to receive any firm word on the subject of funding from its police force, and we haven't, as yet, actually begun any meaningful negotiations with them on the subject, we look like being in for a hectic year. Stewart Hulse of Langdale MRT has been doing some good work fact-finding what is happening in other areas. If nothing else, this serves to tell us where we, in the Lakes, are in the great scheme of things. The answer is....

We're not doing too well at the moment.

Control of our radio channels (and all land and sea rescue channels) is being handed over to the MCA

(Maritime Coastguard Agency) but they are not happy about handling our present low band channels, only the new high band ones.

The worst scenario we could envisage in all of this, is that Cumbria Constabulary will not be in a sufficiently robust financial position to be able to offer, timely funding for communications equipment, to its volunteer MR service. This would cause us a problem. Some teams would be able to afford self-funding and some would not. The figures involved are very high, it's estimated that £400,000 would be required to equip the Lakes MRT's to something approaching the desired level. Lower levels of equipment issue, would, of course, result in a lower cost. We may be forced to accept the present compromise when it comes to the safety of our own people on the hill in that, not every team member carries a radio now and we're not dropping like flies because of it. However, under no circumstances can we afford to compromise the safety of our casualties and a functioning communications system is a must. The quoted figure may seem high but we have to remember that it stems from two new considerations.

Firstly, when the costing exercise was carried out, it was assumed that every hill-going member of LDSAMRA's MRT's would get a radio. This isn't the case at the moment with only approximately 50% of that number having access to radios.

Secondly, the obvious comparison to be made is that the Scottish MRT's already have over £500,000 ear-marked for their entire area, not just one region. This figure doesn't include any local police force contributions and has, mostly, come from central government and a large bequest. It also has to be born in mind that the Scots are already on high band and have been for around fifteen years. Their needs by way of equipment and infrastructure can be no where near as high as our own, where a complete operating system change is envisaged. Much like the currently on-going police change-over to tetra.

Around us, other regions have already begun the migration to the new frequencies. A large number have fully functioning high band systems, keeping their present low band equipment only in a fall-back capacity for when they are required to operate with teams who have no HB radios. Certainly MRT's such as Bowland Pennine and CRO are at the cutting edge with the new technology and both have new systems in place and under trial. Cave Rescue Organisation currently enjoys access to the Lancs police tetra network and Martyn Staveley, of CRO, is giving the system a preliminary thumbs-up and it seems to be performing well in trials.

Early in June, probably about the time you are reading this, LDSAMRA has a critical meeting with Cumbria Constabulary, the outcome of which will now, more than ever determine how we approach this problem. "Come back next year" does not now seem to be an option as we won't have a next year. Other regions have already made the move to high band, all with some level of police help. At the time, they believed they had until 2009 before this became critical. They chose to make the move now, not because they had to but because there was positive benefit to their communications by so doing. It will actually benefit us to move to the new high band frequencies. Certainly, Nick Verrall, TL of Langdale MRT is looking with interest at the situation. He has a brand new base to fit out and it would seem to make sense to do it with the kit we will eventually all be using and not old and redundant hardware that will have to come back out again in a short time. We have less time in all of this than we first thought.

When I know more, so will you.

**Rob Brookes, Radio Officer**

## Fund Raising

**£250** was raised by Andy Dell and others when they provided short-notice emergency cover for a horse-riding event.

Bucket Collection at Tebay on Saturday 17th May generated **£1184.49**. Which is up on last year although the weather was terrible, that may have been the reason we got more, the public took pity on us standing in the rain.

## RAF MOUNTAIN RESCUE GOES TO EVEREST

To bring the Cumbrian Mountain Festival 2002/03 to an end Kendal Mountain Search and Rescue Team presented a talk at Kendal Town Hall on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2003. The festival has been sponsored by the Cumbria Rural Development programme which was created to regenerate tourism and help rebuild small local businesses following the Foot & Mouth epidemic in 2001. The twelve mountain rescue teams in the Lake District have been supporting the festival since it started in April 2002. All the proceeds from the talk are going to the team a total of **346.60** was raised.

Flight Sergeant Dan Carroll and Warrant Officer Heavy Whalley MBE BEM gave a very interesting and informative talk on the RAF Mountain Rescue Teams expedition to Everest in May 2001. Dan Carroll started the talk with an explanation the reasoning behind the trip. The team leader Flight Lieutenant Ted Atkins had been to Everest with a combined services trip previously, which had not been successful and thought that they could do better. He decided that the members of the RAF Mountain Rescue Teams could succeed as although they were not great climbers they were all very fit and could work as a team. Of the 150 members of the mountain rescue teams 14 were chosen for the expedition. They all had a role in organising and setting up the expedition and all had a specific roll on the trip.

Who would take a Garden Shed to Everest? Ted Atkins having previously worked in Antarctica decided that a stable unit as a mess tent would be beneficial to the expedition and so a Garden Shed was taken to Everest Base Camp. This proved to be great assistance in the successful outcome of the trip. One night while celebrating one of the team members birthday they had a call that someone had collapsed on the mountain and could they help. They immediately finished their drinks and went off and rescued a member of an Australian party. This event made major headlines in the press.

After a period of acclimatisation the team were ready to attempt the peak and it was put to them that when they felt able, to go for it. Dan and Rusty made a successful summit attempt and other members of the team were following. Unfortunately one of the members became ill and the remainder of the team abandoned their summit attempts to return their colleague back to Base Camp.

If you think Everest is remote, think again, there were 1000 people at Everest Base Camp and 500 at Advanced Base Camp and the route to the top was a continuous flow of people, sounds like the Lakes at a Bank Holiday!!.

At the end of the trip the team collected 40 Yak loads of rubbish and removed it from the camp. The Shed was

donated as an Eye Hospital and can still be seen out in Nepal.



Liz Parkes, Fund-Raising Officer

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