November Trainings

By far the easiest way to join Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team is to attend the (following) Team training sessions. All that is required is an OES card (for insurance purposes; to sign-up, talk to the on-duty deputy at the Tahoe City Sheriff's station) and a bunch of enthusiasm. Nordic Team trainings are designed to be fun and informative: the result is camaraderie. The Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team garage is located at 223 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City, behind the Tahoe City Chevron.

November 5: Avalanche transceiver practice—before ski season. 5:00 PM at the Team garage.

November 8: Familiarization of the terrain surrounding Castle Peak—we have lots of searches here. Meet at the Team garage 7:30 AM or at the start of the Castle Valley dirt road at 8:15.

November 14: Familiarization of the terrain about the Martis Peak/Rifle Peak area—we have searches here too. Meet at the Team garage at 7:30 AM or at the start of the dirt road up Martis Peak (Truckee side of Highway 267, just below the pass) at 8:00.

Team Member Profile

If, from Carnelian Bay, you round Flick Point into Agate Bay, and ascend a few blocks, you’ll come to the main office and corporate headquarters (HQ as they like to call it) of Let George Do It. (They’re a busy bunch; call ahead to make an appointment.) Once you charm your way past the secretary, on the office wall you’ll notice a collection of photographs. One is a flash-photo taken at night of a skier wearing a Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team parka. He’s wearing a full pack too and has a headlamp wrapped around his parka hood. What catches your eye is that just about every square centimeter of the skier is encased in rime ice. Parka, goggles, face, leading edge of the nose, all rimed. The rocks in the background are rimed; the camera flash illuminates a sky dense with falling snow. The skier, of course, is Team Treasurer Scott Schoepfer.

A couple years ago, during a particularly powerful weather event, the Nordic Team was called out to search for a skier missing from Sugar Bowl ski area. Scott Schoepfer, along with Rob Spencer and Jeff Rieger, drew the short straw and volunteered to search the Onion Creek side of Mt. Lincoln. This is not polite terrain. The...
high end of the watershed is deeply incised by at least seven different drainages. Cul-de-sacs above granitic and volcanic cliff bands are everywhere, as are slopes levered way beyond their maximum angle of repose. Many long, narrow avalanche chutes split the cirque, the side-loaded starting zones hanging far above in the dark. Also, the Onion Creek side of the mountain faces SW, windward. During the full force of a winter cyclone, there exists little cover on this flank of the mountain. After a big storm, rime ice, in some places a meter and a half thick, sprains the peak's tortured hemlocks. Welcome to Rime Central. Scott, Rob, and Jeff put a full night into traversing this icefest of a mountain, looking for clues to the lost guy's whereabouts. Route finding was a nightmare, avalanche danger extreme, the weather raging. They didn't reach the relative safety of the ski area boundary until well after sunrise the next morning. This route on that night remains one of the most severe any skiers from the Team have ever undertaken during a search. As it played out, the young man was found elsewhere; one of the few tangible conciliatory prizes from the night is the photo on the wall in the office of George D. It

(George, Scott Schroepfer's alter ego, heads the construction business Scott started many years ago. Scott's yellow work truck, the "George Mobile", is easily spotted everywhere around North Lake Tahoe. The original George Mobile, from 15 years back, was a two-wheel drive mini-truck sporting a home-made camper the size of a small condominium—the whole affair listing dangerously to starboard.)

Scott Schroepfer was raised under the early morning shadow of the southern Sierra in Visalia, California. Working the family farm as a youth, he tended everything from olives to oranges. After high school Scott split olive county, earned an entomology degree with water polo honors from UC Davis, then moved to the Sierra. Fit from telemarking the backcountry and the slopes of Squaw Valley—all the while tom-calling around with evidently nothing better to do—he joined Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team. It was the early 1980s. Nordic ski boots were getting heavier, cat-eye Vuarnets were in Vogue, klister leaked in your leather-bottomed rucksack. Scott was there, on the cutting edge, taking unbelievably high-speed endos into the breakable crust with the best of 'em. In short order Scott became a lead search for the Team and was elected onto the Board of Directors. He quickly appointed himself as one of the Team's first 'quippers [not my word], i.e. the man when it came to assembling and maintaining the Team's newly acquired ski and high-angle rescue equipment. During the summers of '83 and '84, Scott could be seen daisy-chained to a Stokes litter, dangling from Star Wall, a young woman strapped into the basket—another "practice victim." The years shined by. Scott met a coiffeur with mag wheels on her Volkswagen bug, and married her. Suddenly, Scott's hair was different. In 1989, hair looking good, Scott was elected as the Team Treasurer, the post he still holds today.

During his tenure, Scott has been involved in most every aspect of the Nordic Team. He's participated in countless search and rescues, vast numbers of training exercises, the Education Committee, umpire Great Ski Races, eight board meetings per winter, plus handling the Team's finances. During the early 1990s, George's Scott's construction talents were instrumental in getting the Nordic Team garage up and running.

Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team Officers

President
Gerald Rockwell 583-5376
Vice President
Joe Pace 583-1806
Treasurer
Scott Schroepfer 5-6-2809
Secretary
Jackie Thomas 587-2687
Board Members
Steve Masten 546-7968
Dirk Schoenmaker 583-2987
Steve Twomey 575-7280
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Committee Chairs
Cuisine
Debra Schroepfer 546-2809
Dispatch
Jackie Thomas 587-2687
Education
Whitney Foehl 583-8611
Karen Honeywell 516-8699
Douglas Read 583-6381
Randall Osterhuber 587-3092
Randall Osterhuber 587-3092
Snowcats
Tony Remington 583-1684
Snowmobiles
Ray O'Brien 581-4385
Training
Paul Honeywell 546-8609
Truck/Equipment
Russ Viehn 582-1695
Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team garage
All phone numbers area code (530).

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