



SnowLine

The Official Newsletter of the
TAHOE NORDIC SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC.
 Lake Tahoe • Truckee • Donner Summit

Please come join the next meeting of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team. That would be Monday night, **February 6**, at 6:30 PM. We'll meet at Granlibakken, of course—in their Ski Hut—and thrash about all the good that's going on. This is the core of the winter, and the Nordic Team has much to discuss and plan: searches, trainings, and the 30th anniversary of The Great Ski Race. See you there!

Rescue

At about 9:30 PM on January 17, searchers from Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team located Tom the bartender near the Eder saddle off the backside of Sugar Bowl's Mt. Judah. Tom had been snowboarding at the ski area that day—in light rain—and left the ski area's boundary sometime during the afternoon. His friends reported him missing. 30 years old, and from Walnut Creek, Tom the bartender was unfamiliar with Donner Summit's backcountry.

As he descended into flatter and flatter terrain, Tom the bartender took off his snowboard and continued on foot. Realizing at dusk (now snowing hard) that he was now a backcountry snowboarder, he excavated a shallow snow hole as an emergency shelter.

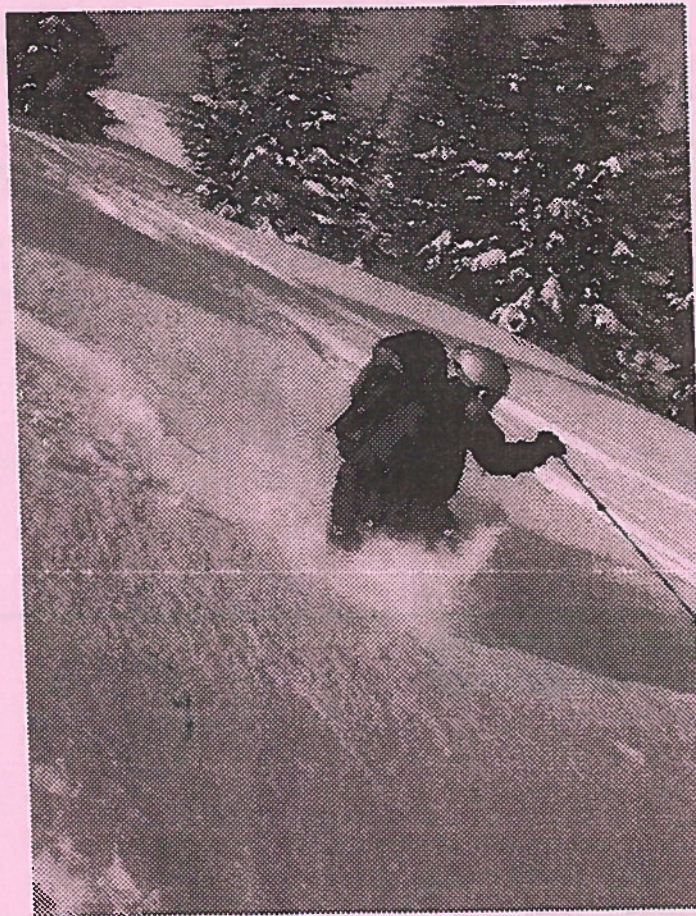
When the Team searchers found him, he was instantly energized, but slipped quickly into uncontrollable shivering as his stormy adventure caught up with his lightly-dressed self. After being equipped with food, water, dry clothes, and a headlamp, the Team skiers escorted Tom the bartender about 2000 yards (hey, that's not my number—I'm just the messenger here) to the SSE where Scoop Remenih had the Team snowcat at the ready.

Scoop, along with co-pilot Jimmy Smith, had spent the previous couple hours in a no-holds-barred wrestling match with the precipitous creek crossing that lace Emigrant Canyon. But, after finally pinning their

opponent, Scoop, Jimmy, and the Team snowcat met up with and ferried out all the skiers and the search subject.

Russ Viehmann informed me that the Team received an email from Tom the bartender a couple days ago thanking the Team for all their effort, and offering cocktails "on the house" at Tom's place of employ in the Bay Area.

This was the Team's second search of the year.



When I lifted his pack out of the truck this morning, I was reminded that Team searcher Mike Kennett is the one you want on your side when something goes wrong. This guy carries some gear. Either that, or he's packing around an unabridged edition of The Riverside Shakespeare. Here, Mikey drills a knee-deep line high above the Mt. Rose Highway, January 21, 2006.

Photograph by Randall Osterhuber

Board

As an entity, Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team carries some mass. The "Team" consists of all the individual members, every function (searches, rescues, trainings, public outreach programs, The Great Ski Race, etc.) the Team undertakes, the Team's equipment, vehicles, and garage, its finances, and the Team's history. There's lots of facets to our crown jewel, each reflecting what the Team is, what it does, and what it is responsible for. Steering and guiding this gem is the Board of Directors of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team. If you've ever wondered who, how, and what the Board does, Team Director Dirk Schoonmaker sends this dispatch to fill you in.

The Board of the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team is made up of seven members: President, Vice President, Secretary and four Directors. The Treasurer is appointed by the Board and usually attends meetings and his opinion is highly valued, but "technically" he does not vote on issues that come before the Board.

The Board meets sometime during the week before every general meeting, and usually once or twice during the summer. Meetings rotate between members' houses with the host cooking a meal and serving drinks. (The Team does not pay any expenses for these meetings.)

In a nutshell, the Board determines how money is spent, the direction of the Team (both short and long term), and handles personnel issues.

Meetings are very informal, with each member bringing up issues that they consider important. Occasionally there are votes to determine the outcome of an issue, but more

Next General Meeting is Monday, February 6, 2006, 6:30 pm at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut

often a consensus is reached without having to vote. Heated discussions are rare, but even when they do occur they are usually useful and fair.

Topics discussed at a typical meeting might include: reviewing a letter from a Team member requesting funding for schooling; equipment needs for the truck, garage or snowcat; how the trainings are going (enough?, too many?, attendance?); roster decisions (movement of members on and off the "A" and "B" teams); liaison issues with the sheriff's office; and planning entertainment and trainings for the next general meeting. Once in a while the Board will address a complaint or conflict concerning the Team or specific Team members. And about every five years the Team Bylaws are reviewed and updated as needed.

In a lot of ways, the Team runs itself due to a core group of dedicated and experienced members, many of whom have been involved since the Team's inception and many of whom have served on the Board. As a result, the Board's most important job is to make sure the Team's legacy is upheld while at the same time handling day-to-day matters.

FrankenLung

Black Diamond's Avalung II is a 40 cm long device that looks suspiciously like an enema bag; you wear it on the outside of your clothing. If you're buried under the snow and able to get your chapped lips around the Avalung's mouthpiece, the source of your inspired air will be separated from your expired air. This may be to your advantage if you're going to be there a while. Breathe deep the gathering gloom. If you cut all the strapping off the Avalung and leave just the enema part, you eliminate one third of the device's weight. A few cable ties or a slug of duct tape will secure it to the shoulder strap of your backpack so you don't have to wear it separately—but it's still at the ready. This, of course, violates all warranties and owner's manual instructions, but

if these devices are anything they're experimental. The new, chopped down "FrankenLung" now weighs in at a svelte 187 grams. There are lots of "ifs" with this product, and it's been somewhat controversial since its introduction, but more than a couple lives saved have been attributed to its use. I'll leave you with this homework assignment: List all the differences between an Avalung and an avalanche transceiver.

Training Dates

Free up your calendars so that you can take full advantage of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team training opportunities. Two things: 1.) make sure you're in possession of a current OES card, and 2.) call the training organizer to let them know your intention of attending. Schedules may change, so keep abreast...

February 4: Paul Cushing (581-4354) is leading a ski tour of Jake's Peak. Meet at the Team garage (223 Fairway Drive in Tahoe City, behind the Chevron station) at 7:30 AM.

February 9: Brian York (581-4038) will coordinate a two-hour avalanche transceiver practice at Squaw Valley tonight. Meet behind the Children's World at 6:30 PM.

February 11: Jeff DeVries (546-4083) and TJ Johnson (308-2530) are organizing a joint skier/snowmobiler training starting at Sugar Bowl then heading out of bounds. Meet at the Team garage at 7:30 AM or in the Judah parking lot at 8:15.

February 18: I was sent word that Joe Pace (583-1806) is leading a "big mountain tour" above the West shore today. Now, I'm not sure if that's a "big-mountain" tour or a big "mountain-tour," but either way you might want to throw an extra bologna sandwich into your pack. Meet at the Team garage at 7:30 AM.

February 26: Sarah Lagano (775-745-7037) is coordinating an inbounds/out of bounds tour of the Mt. Rose ski area. Since the demographic attending this ski park leans

heavily toward the ouch!-of-control, Metallica-blasting Reno adolescent, you might not want to forget your helmet. Gather (with full armor) at the Team garage at 7:30 AM, or in the ski area parking lot at 8:15.

Puzzled why c came to represent the speed of light in Einstein's famous equation when we all know z is the fastest letter in the alphabet,
—Randall Osterhuber



Team Officers

President	Russ Viehmann	525-6978
Vice President	Brian York	581-4038
Treasurer	Scott Schroeffer	546-2809
Secretary	Sue Duerksen	412-3836
Board Members	Mark Johnson	583-1308
	Sarah Lagano	775-745-7037
	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
	Dirk Schoonmaker	583-2929
Directors-at-large	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Joe Pace	583-1806
	Doug Read	583-6381
	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
	Steve Twomey	525-7280

Committee Chairs

Cuisine	Debra Schroeffer	546-2809
Dispatch	Jackie Thomas	587-2687
Education	Jim Coffey	583-1276
Equipment	Brian York	581-4038
Great Ski Race	Doug Read	583-6381
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Scoop Remenih	583-1684
	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Newsletter	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
	Paul Honeywell	546-8609
	Mike Kennett	581-2101
	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
	Peter York	583-0465
Truck	Mark Johnson	583-1308
Website		
All phone numbers area code (530) unless otherwise noted.		

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