

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

A Patrol Cliffhanger

Members Participate in CSUS Challenge Center Event

Twelve members of the ski patrol had a day of team building, challenge, & fun at Cal State Sacramento's Peak Adventures Challenge Center on Nov. 22. The event was part of an ongoing effort by the training committee to promote teamwork and cooperation among ski patrol members, as well as providing an off-snow chance for us to get to know each other.

The day's activities started on the ground, with the Challenge Center staff presenting a number of problems for the group to solve. These "initiatives" are designed to highlight communication & problem solving patterns that all groups have. Problems presented to the group included an "ice crossing" where the group had to work in silence to navigate across an ice flow of tiles. In another challenge, the group had to work toward a goal in a series of task sub-groups. Sound like search & rescue? While one team designed a capsule (*photo above right*) for an egg to be dropped from a 40 foot tower and survive intact, another team ascended the tower to assemble the design & manage the drop itself. The group also tackled the task of getting members over a 14 foot wall using mostly the "we-haul" technique (*see photo below left*).



The idea behind these kinds of activities is that real-life situations the ski patrol encounters involve communication dynamics similar to those challenges presented to the group at the Challenge Center. Often a group must make decisions with limited information, time, & resources. The challenges presented to participants highlighted the need for clear communication, as well as the value that each individual brings to any group effort.



The afternoon featured high ropes challenges for those who wanted to try them. This included a climbing wall, a climbing tower, and the platform leap (*photo right*). The value of a ropes course experience is that individuals can challenge themselves to move beyond their comfort zones in situations that involve the perception of risk, rather than real risk.

Many thanks to Jeff Holm for organizing the event. The patrol covered the event cost, but attendees were challenged to go out & find sponsors for the Echo to Kirkwood Race to contribute back to the ski patrol.



PATROL CALENDAR

December

- 2 - General Meeting
- 13 - On the hill refresher
- 27 - New Member Ski Day

January

- 3 - Winter Safety Training
- 6 - General Meeting
- 17 & 18 - Winter Open House
- 17 - New Member Ski Day
- 24-26 - SAREX training event
- 31 - Qualifying Ski Day

February

- 3 - General Meeting
- 14 - New Member Ski Day
- 28 - Avalanche Training

March

- 2 - General Meeting
- 9 - Race Meeting
- 13 - New Member Ski Day
- 16 - Race Meeting
- 20 - Echo-Kirkwood Race & Tour

April

- 6 - General Meeting
- 10 - Ski Skills Training

May

- 1 - Elections & Final Season Meeting

This Year's On the Hill Refresher a Big Success

December has been a busy month for the Training Committee. For this year's on the hill refresher event, there was plenty of snow in the Robbs Saddle area for skis and snow cats. Despite a light rain, the event was a big success, in no small part due to the planning and coordination efforts of the event's organizers Grant Nelson & Jeff Holm. Valued help also came from master of communications George Doty, our favorite snow cat drivers Dale & Ken Kirk, and the "victims" that search & rescue efforts focused on (Mike Peart, Rich Platt, Monte & Julie Hendricks). Participants learned the value of preparedness, structuring searches, using clear & concise radio communications, and managing themselves as part of a team. Those with leaky jackets learned, well, just *how* leaky they were. Overall it was a good "dry" run for remembering the details of what to bring on searches (right down to pencils & Rite-in-the-rain paper). Congratulations, everyone, on a safe & educational event.



Winter Skills Training on Jan. 3 (required for new members)

The annual winter skills training event will take place Saturday, **January 3, 2004** from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at County Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court in Placerville. Patrol members can come & help give input into training events & learning scenarios. Note that new members are required to attend this event.

First Responder Recert Class

Jim Cahill is going to organize a First Responder Recert class for those Patrollers whose First Responder card expires in the Spring or Summer. Contact the patrol message phone at 530-647-1825 to be included in the class.

Loon Lake Open House

The Loon Lake Chalet Open House will be on **January 17 and 18, 2004**, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Help is always needed, so your assistance with greeting visitors or bringing cookies would be a great addition to this fun event. Contact Julie Hendricks if you have questions.

Keep Finding Those Race Sponsors!

The patrol is looking for the \$25 & \$50 sponsorships for the Echo to Kirkwood Race. So far Mike Peart leads the sponsorship race with \$800. Don't limit your requests to sports-related sponsors, anyone will work! Get your workplace together for a monetary contribution & you can put your business or worksite on as a sponsor. Updated information about the race has been added to the skip patrol website www.ednsp.org. Forms for sponsors can be downloaded there. If you have any questions about sponsorships, check out the website or contact Dave Boyer.

Patrol Clothing, Caps, Badges

David Rolloff is currently gauging demand for ordering ski patrol polo shirts, ball caps, & name badges. He'll have a sign-up at the January meeting. If you're interested in having embroidering on your gear, visit Sundance Uniforms & Embroidery in Shingle Springs (4050 Durock Rd # 13). You must be listed on the current roster to use the official patrol logo on your gear.

Got Newsletter Info?

The patrol secretary *gratefully* accepts items for the monthly newsletter. If you have stories, photos, ski & trail tips, interesting patrol related-trivia, or other information for the newsletter, please give it to David Rolloff at the general meeting, phone him at 916-278-5020 or email him at rolloff@csus.edu.

Ski Patrol Standing Orders:

- Stay together, use the buddy system & work as a team
- Keep in communication with your team & dispatcher
- Initiate a plan & make it known

- Provide for safety first
- Appoint lead & sweep when moving as a group
- Think clearly, stay alert, keep calm, & act decisively
- Recognize current weather conditions & obtain forecasts
- Obtain current avalanche forecast & use sound judgment
- Lead by example
- Learn survival skills & practice them
- Ensure your pack and equipment is patrol ready
- Retain control of your group at all times