

SCOUTS-L

LOST SCOUT

From <@pucc.PRINCETON.EDU:owner-scouts-l@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU> **Mon Oct 21 18:23:03 1996**
Return-Path: <@pucc.PRINCETON.EDU:owner-scouts-l@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>
Received: from pucc.PRINCETON.EDU (smtpe@pucc.Princeton.EDU [128.112.129.99]) by cap1.CapAccess.org (8.6.12/8.6.10) with SMTP id SAA26820; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 18:23:03 -0400**
Received: from PUCC.PRINCETON.EDU by pucc.PRINCETON.EDU (IBM VM SMTP V2R2) with BSMTP id 8812; **Mon, 21 Oct 96 18:18:03 EDT**
Received: from TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (NJE origin MAILER@TCUBVM) by PUCC.PRINCETON.EDU (LMail V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 6917; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 18:18:01 -0400**
Received: from TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (NJE origin LISTSERV@TCUBVM) by TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LMail V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 5231; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 15:08:48 -0600**
Received: from TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU by TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LISTSERV release 1.8b) with NJE id 5182 for SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 15:08:03 -0600**
Received: from TCUBVM (NJE origin SMTP@TCUBVM) by TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LMail V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 5181; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 15:07:12 -0600**
Received: from spot.Colorado.EDU by tcubvm.is.tcu.edu (IBM VM SMTP V2R2) with TCP; **Mon, 21 Oct 96 15:07:09 CST**
Received: from localhost (amick@localhost) by spot.Colorado.EDU (8.7.6/8.7.3/CNS-4.0p) with SMTP id OAA13264 for <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>; **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 14:05:03 -0600 (MDT)**
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Message-ID: <Pine.GSO.3.95.961021131427.8859B-100000@spot.Colorado.EDU>
Date: **Mon, 21 Oct 1996 14:05:03 -0600**
Reply-To: Amick Robert <amick@spot.Colorado.EDU>
Sender: SCOUTS-L - Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>
From: Amick Robert <amick@spot.Colorado.EDU>
Subject: **Re: Lost Scout Drill?**
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

In-Reply-To: <Pine.SUN.3.91-FP.961021095858.10762A-100000@cap1.capaccess.org>

Status: RO

X-Status:

On Mon, 21 Oct 1996, Paul H. Brown wrote:

> **On Sat, 19 Oct 1996, David E Williams wrote:**

>

> **OK. What does the team do? Are there search techniques that work better**

> **than others? Things that work well when I have 50 searchers available that**

> **don't work when there are only 5?**

Mountain Search and Rescue organizations typically will use two basic search methods: The "scratch search" and the "line search."

1. The "Scratch Search"

The "quick response" technique involves a "scratch" search which means that you take a small and fast team or teams to check the most likely places where the person(s) might be found quickly based on the most accurate information of where they were last seen and where they were probably going to wind up. Two way radio communications are obviously vital for such efforts to coordinate efforts and update information.

In this scenario two or more radio-equipped scratch teams would then start from each end of the trail, work towards the middle and check out hazardous areas such as rockslides, cliffs, etc. and generally try to find the most logical place the hikers might be or have strayed into; they may ask other hikers on the trail if they have seen the individuals and if so, where/when, etc.

For example:

"Joe and Jim are freshman college students from the east coast. this is their first time in a mountainous area. they decided to go hiking on the mesa trail, which is well-marked and developed. They left at 5pm from the trailhead, and should have reached the mesa parking lot by 7pm; did not arrive; it is now dark and they are two hours overdue. Their car is found at the parking lot next to the trailhead, and their

friends went to meet them at the other end of the trail. When they did not show up, their friends called 9-1-1 and reported them overdue."

Important clues to ask about are:

Competence of hikers, age, health/physical condition; last known clothing; survival supplies, food, water, flashlights, extra clothing, how much experience do they have; are they familiar or unfamiliar with the area; is this is their first trip on that trail or have they done it before? etc.

Sometimes, hikers miss a trail and wind up in another basin or valley especially at night.

Other cases have found missing hikers at home while their friends and/or family are out looking for them, because they missed a trail, wound up in a different location, and hitchhiked home. So it's always good to check the unlikely places where they might turn up unexpectedly. In this case, they had no way to contact their friends/roommates since they were out looking for the "missing" hikers.

A good rule of thumb in search and rescue is to "expect the unexpected." Often the most unlikely and improbable scenario will be the one that has actually occurred so don't limit your thinking and "what-if" brainstorming.

So always try to get a family member or friend/roommate to stay at home in case they turn up there or try to call.

2. The "line search"

If the "scratch teams" don't turn up any clues, then plan "B" involves mounting a "line search" where many searchers line up shoulder to shoulder

(usually about 10 feet apart) and form a long line across a designated search area, and literally search every square foot of the area for signs of the victims. The area is "flagged" with surveyors tape to indicate it has been searched and the "grid" is noted on the search team map at the "incident command post." This obviously involves a very large effort by rescue groups/organizations and is a "last resort" when all other "scratch" efforts have been unsuccessful.

It is important to note that in real situations, victims who are children or mentally challenged may be more difficult to find because they become fearful of the rescuers who are trying to help them. There have been cases where the victims actually hid from rescuers because they thought they were the "orange-coated meanies" coming to get them. This makes the work of the line and scratch teams far more difficult. Often it is necessary for searchers to search an area, then re-search it or look backwards occasionally to see if the person is hiding in the trees.

It is also very important for the teams to use lights and whistles to make their presence known, but to also frequently stop and all listen very carefully for noises, calls for help, or to look for lights and signs of the victims.

For more information, the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG) in Boulder, Colorado, has an excellent book on Mountain Search and Rescue Techniques which can be obtained at mountaineering/outdoor stores, or ordered directly from RMRG. RMRG also has a web page accessible through web browsers such as infoseek.

The National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) is also a very good resource to tap for all aspects of SAR and also has a web page.

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