

NORTHFIELD MOUNTAIN NORDIC SKI PATROL



Volume 33

Issue 1

October 20, 2011

OEC REFRESHER

**Saturday, November 5th
7:30 am Northfield Mountain**

HILL REFRESHER

**Saturday, December 3rd
8:00 am Northfield Mountain**



OEC changes have arrived along with the changing colors of New England leaves. The new 5th edition of the OEC manual contains new information, techniques, and topics which will be covered at our Refresher on November 5th. Come prepared to brush up on old skills as well as learn new skills to stay current with the required standard of care for OEC technicians.

Registration starts at 7:30 am with the day's events kicking off at 8:00 am sharp. Things will wrap up around 4:00 pm.

WHAT TO BRING: your own copy of the OEC 5th Edition manual, a *completed* Refresher study guide, *completed* 12-page OEC 5E Orientation Exercise, NSP and OEC cards, CPR pocket mask, patrol packs, lunch, outdoor clothes, and a check for \$66 to NMNSP to pay for your dues.

If you haven't already done so, pick up your copy of the new OEC manual in the Northfield Mountain first aid room ASAP as you'll need a copy to study for the Refresher. If you've misplaced your study guide or forgot to save the 12-page PDF (*continued next column*)

Who knows? We may have an early winter and actually see snow on the ground for our Hill Refresher. Plan for an outdoor day of adventure, starting with registration, coffee, and donuts at 8:00 am. Activities will start at 9:00 am.

Details are still being worked out, so devious minds are sure to throw in a few surprises. Fire-building, shelter building, toboggan handling, map & compass skills, search & rescue? Come prepared for anything and everything.

We'll be covering many elements of the AED and CPR during the OEC Refresher and only covering the balance of the material on December 3rd so we can devote more time to hill skills.

WHAT TO BRING: patrol packs, outdoor gear, and something for a potluck group lunch. We can coordinate who is bringing what to eat/drink via email. ✱

EXECUTIVE BOARD

2011 – 2012 Season

Patrol Representative – Tom Deam
Assistant Patrol Rep – Bob Duris
Patrol Secretary – Bill Schweikert
Patrol Treasurer – Sue Menick
Assistant Treasurer – Jonathan Shefftz
Past Patrol Rep – Bill Osborn
Patrol Liaison – Bill Gabriel

OEC REFRESHER (*continued from first column*) orientation exercise that was emailed to all patrollers this summer, contact Tom Deam to coordinate getting the material: tdeam@verizon.net.

Patrol packs will be used this year! Don't think you'll just be leaving it in the car or tucked into a corner of the auditorium while we use training supplies. Refresh your memory about what you have and where in your pack so you can pull it out when needed for scenarios. ✱

CHOCOLATE POT CHAT

by Tom Deam

OEC Refresher is just about upon us. Sue Menick, Bob Duris, and Bob Presutti have put their heads together and planned a comprehensive and active event for the Patrol. A while back a PDF form was sent for all to complete and bring to Refresher on November 5th. It is an orientation exercise to get us familiar with the recent 5th Edition of the OEC Manual.

NSP can not make its members buy and complete the exercise, but it is strongly recommended. However, NMNSP has purchased a manual for each NMNSP Patrol member and **completion of the form is a requirement for each of us**. Please complete it before Nov 5th and bring it with you. Refresher will be more meaningful and we'll get out on time if it's done.

Each new season brings a new face and the loss of one, or a few in this case. George Baitinger is a transfer to our Patrol from the Northwest. He has a good bit of experience in SAR and OEC and is a welcome asset to our roster! Ben White is soon to join our Patrol and also has experience in Back Country Emergency Care with a parallel organization. Both George and Ben will be welcome additions!

Besides the OEC Refresher, (bring a complete Patrol Pack, NSP and OEC Card, CPR Pocket Mask, water, lunch, and dress for the weather), other dates to keep in mind: our Patrol Meeting on November 13th, On- the-Hill Nordic Refresher on December 3rd (also CPR/FPR Recert), and our Patrol Meeting Christmas/Holiday/Snow Dance Party on December 11th.

This year, Dave Brown, Larry, and Ozzie will not be renewing. Ozzie hopes to change to Alumni status. I am going to an In-active status this coming season due to some "structural issues." That means I'll be at Refresher and pay dues but will not be in an active Patroller status. Hopefully the year off will help or might be a reaffirmation that skiing, and being a OEC Technician, is not a joint-friendly activity. That's the way it goes sometimes. ❄

WWW.NMNSP.ORG

Don't forget to check our website for the latest patrol news and dates of upcoming courses and events. If you don't remember the user name and password for entering the 'patrol room', contact Bill Schweikert at: webmaster@nmnsp.org

The next issue of the Rattlebone will be published this winter. Please get all articles, information, dates, etc. to Joannie Duris by January 15th. (978) 928-5587 or jduris@charter.net.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

by Joannie Duris

It has been a while since I've been able to introduce a new candidate or patroller, but I think it has been well worth the wait. **George Baitinger** has signed on as a new member of the Northfield Mountain Nordic Ski Patrol. He recently moved to Massachusetts from Eugene, Oregon. He accompanied his wife of 25 years, Mary, who was recruited to UMass, Amherst. George works in academic administration.

Outdoor activities have been a focus of his life for years. In high school he began hiking, climbing, and skiing, then went on to receive his BA in Natural History from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA.

For 13 years George worked for the federal government, first as a ranger with the US Forest Service and then with the National Park Service. In Oregon he volunteered for ten years with Lane County Search and Rescue / Eugene Mountain Rescue (EMR). He also served for 15 years as a trip leader and mountaineering instructor with the Obsidians Outdoor Club. Within the City of Eugene, he was a trained volunteer with the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

In 2005, George became a member of the Willamette Backcountry Ski Patrol. Shortly after joining the Patrol, he began teaching Mountain Travel classes, then became a Mountain Travel and Rescue instructor. He also assisted in teaching avalanche rescue classes and was the avalanche coordinator. In his last few months before leaving, he was elected to the position of Training Director for the Patrol.

I always like to end with a few interesting facts: George is not a complete transplant from the West coast. Although he has lived most of his life in Oregon, he was born in New Jersey. And here's a tidbit to be intrigued by—he is trained in Man-Tracking!

George's wealth of backcountry experience is a welcome addition to our patrol and to New England. Search and Rescue, Man-Tracking anyone? I can already see Tom recruiting George for several training sessions throughout the coming season. Think snow! ❄



George Baitinger at the Gold Lake Sno-Park Shelter.

MY FINAL RECOUNT OF THAT NORDIC ADVENTURE

by Tom Deam

I hate to write this as it is a painful memory but my Norwegian Trip ended suddenly. The previous training was supposed to lead up to a Field Training Exercise: skiing, campouts in the snow, maybe a swim or two, and possibly a paddle through the scenic Fjords. First though some parachute events had to take place.

I rate water jumps as soft and pleasant landings, as long as one is faced into the wind. Faced the other way, it's hard to catch a breath when pulled face down across the water in a sudden gust of wind. Deep snow is fine, but the frozen dirt below it reminds me of concrete runways.

Our intrepid band of USN and UK RM Parachutists had about five days of jumps lined up. The time allowed for a few weather days: snow, wind, etc. Our first few days were downright great! Clear blue skies, fairly light winds, and very deep snow on the Drop Zone (DZ or D Zed).

UK Chutes were used, a bit smaller than our T-10 variants, but still a good chute. The perfectly good aircraft we exited from was an RAF C-130 which is no different from a US C-130 except for the insignia and accent of the crew. Since there were only about ten of us, we'd be jumping the tail ramp instead of the side doors.

I liked the ramp as it felt like a "giant step" instead of the leap-into-a-gale for a side door exit. Much easier to keep a compact body position and the view from the ramp was always beautiful, especially if one was the first in the "stick" which I tended to always be.

Our first four jumps were in a deep, snow-covered field. A DZ Crew set up panels as the target. They had a truck for the chutes and to transport us back to the airfield for another go. The first jump had a bit of competition: a case of beer for the stick that landed in the tightest group on the DZ. The sticks on that first group were US versus UK.

I was the first in line due to my weight, 175lbs (yes, that is true!!) but closer to 200 with the chute and helmet on. On the plane the signal was given to stand up, hook up, check equipment, and then shuffle to the door—ramp in this case. One did not casually walk as the harness straps hindered any attempt at a stroll. The lower, between-the-legs straps were cinched tight and spaced so as to keep our clear, baritone voices intact.

At the ramp the RAF Jump Master positioned us—me right at the edge. I really loved that sensation of the ground speeding by 800 feet below! At eye level there was a light panel with two lights, Red and Green. The Jump Master and I watched both *(continued next column)*

MY FINAL RECOUNT... *(continued from first column)* at the 30 sec mark. He had his hand on my arm, tightly, to hold me back, as if I were to leave before the appointed time! At the green signal I held on for a nano-second and then let go—out I stepped, forcefully!

A little buffet, much less than a side door, a sight of the toes of my boots, then a jerk on my harness, a look up, and a good "Can-O-Peas" or canopy. Now the DZ Panel was spotted and the smoke gave the wind direction. I also saw the equipment truck.

Our chutes were steerable, not high performance even in that era, but would allow for some course correction. I took a slight turn to the truck, and when I thought it was a good spot, turned into the wind. Always land faced into the wind!

Those after me, all USN, formed up on me and we went to the ground in a tight grouping. I hit, did a good landing and three of those behind me landed on my now collapsed chute. The fifth landed on the fourth jumper's chute. Could not be much better!

We shucked our harnesses, rolled the chutes, put them in the kit bags, and walked about 20 steps through the deep snow to the truck and then waited. Oh, the DZ Panel was about 35 yards away from where we landed.

Next pass and all jumpers exited with good chutes. Their grouping was good but a bit spread out though they all hit the DZ Panel. We waited for them and they had big grins as they approached.

"We'll take that case tonight," one of them said.

"Ah, our grouping was much tighter than yours," said our Senior Enlisted.

"But we all hit the panel."

The Jump Master said, "The bet was tightest grouping on the DZ. They had it and they win the case of beer."

The truck was never parked that close again.

My last jump was onto a frozen lake. Yes, ice is hard, especially when landing on it at a good, but safe, rate of descent. The Brits were testing out something called a Zebedee Boot for such landings. These boots were nothing more than a 3-inch pad of compressible foam which "theoretically" would lessen the landing jolt.

Once again it was a great day when we took off. Since we were encased in a flying tube with small portholes well above our vision when we were seated, we never saw the cloud band directly over the ice-bound DZ. Apparently the ceiling was high enough at the approach for the jump to occur.

At the signal, all again headed to the ramp, this time in a "mixed US/UK" stick. I was once again the lead jumper. The ramp was open, and there I stood as the fjord flew by under my feet. The plane rose slightly as we crossed to dry ground over a hill. Green trees contrasted beautifully against pristine white ground. *(continued next page)*

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, November 5th: OEC Refresher

- **Northfield Mountain.** Details page one.

Saturday, November 5th: Eastern Snow & Avalanche Workshop 2011

- **North Conway, NH.** Details can be found at: <http://nmnsp.org/esaw.pdf>

Sunday, November 13th: Patrol Meeting

- **Northfield Mountain.** 5:30 pm. A perfect time to meet & welcome new candidates! Note the earlier time for our meetings—something decided upon last season to shorten the wait between sweep and the meeting on patrol days.

Saturday, December 3rd: Hill Refresher

- **Northfield Mountain.** Details page one.

Sunday, December 11th: Patrol Meeting & Party

- **Northfield Mountain.** 5:30 pm. Brief business, then party time. All patrollers, candidates, family members, and significant others are welcome to join in on the holiday festivities as we have our traditional potluck supper and Yankee present swap, patrol-style. You never know what you'll end up with until the swap and swap and swap is done! Gifts should be in the \$15 range, practical or silly—we've been known to play with gifts before they find their final owner.



Sunday, January 8th, 2012: Patrol Meeting

- **Northfield Mountain,** 5:30 pm. The business meeting will be followed by a training session, topic TBA. Details will be emailed to patrollers. ❄

BILL SCHWEIKERT'S WORDS OF WISDOM

You might be a serious cross-country skier if...

- Your family moved just to be closer to the snow zone.
- Your mustache is permanently frozen all winter.

You're an *old* cross-country skier if...

- You can remember Tonkin poles.

PATROL PHOTO GALLERY

Take a trip down memory lane...when we had a spring to our step, our hair wasn't gray (we had hair!), and snow—not ice—blanketed the mountain.



January 1985 On-The-Hill Testing



Patrol Group Picture 1979-1980

MY FINAL RECOUNT... (continued from previous page)

It was bit of a bumpier ride, and the Jump Master seemed to be hanging onto my arm instead of just keeping me in check. Green light. He let go, and out I went. All was fine until I looked around. A sudden snow squall had hit and everything was white. Nothing but white above. Nothing but white to the sides. And obviously nothing but white below on that snow-covered frozen lake. No green trees on the hillside to indicate my descent. And the panel and smoke were obscured.

I was not ready for the landing when it came. Usually it's feet first and it probably was, but they were not ready and I hit knees first, then head. The one behind me saw me hit and had a little warning but still hit like a sack of... The rest had hard landings but had been forewarned from our impacts. My knees hurt. Bad!

I got up, saw everyone else moving by rote, got my chute rolled up, dragged it over to the bank and asked for help. My winter in Norway ended. ❄