



# Link Line



an update from **WSN** on **YOUR** Mine Rescue program

Issue #12 July 2010

## Still gold in Hollinger Mine



*Goldcorp Canada Porcupine Gold Mine rescue team pauses for a breath and team photo after being the first to compete in the 2010 provincial mine rescue competition.*

### Porcupine Gold Mine rescue team wins provincial competition

▶ **G**oldcorp Canada's Porcupine Gold Mine rescue team proved there was still gold – gold helmets, that is – in the Hollinger Gold Mine during the 60th annual Ontario Mine Rescue Competition in Timmins in June.

The Timmins District champions and hometown favourites earned the helmets during the event held at the Timmins Gold Mine Tour, which also marked the 100th anniversary of gold production from Hollinger and other major mines in the Timmins area.

Other competing mine rescue teams represented Kirkland Lake Gold Inc. Macassa Mine (Kirkland Lake District), Barrick Gold, Hemlo Mine (Thunder Bay/Algoma District), Xstrata Nickel (Onaping District), Sifto Canada Corp, Compass Minerals (Southern District), Goldcorp Canada, Musselwhite Mine (Red Lake District).

#### Shift From Demo to Rescue Mode

Teams demonstrated their firefighting skills, expertise in rope rescue, and ability with lifting bags, but when an “unexpected” mine emergency occurred teams shifted from demonstration mode to rescue mode.

A vehicle accident, in which one worker was injured, occurred underground when workers noticed smoke. In the resulting confusion, several other workers at the site were missing. After field testing equipment, teams proceeded underground and used a KED to rescue the injured worker from the vehicle before beginning a search for the missing workers.

While one worker returned to surface on his own unharmed, a second was found injured and entangled in a jumbo drill. Teams extricated the victim, only to discover that the fire and smoke had cut off their access to the ramp, forcing them to proceed down the drift to an Alimak raise.

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### The 2010 Winners

#### OVERALL WINNERS

1<sup>st</sup> - Goldcorp Canada, Porcupine Gold Mine

2<sup>nd</sup> - Barrick Gold, Hemlo Mine

#### FIREFIGHTING TEAM AWARD

Goldcorp Canada, Porcupine Gold Mine

#### FIRST AID TEAM AWARD

Xstrata Nickel

#### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AWARD

Barrick Gold, Hemlo Mine

#### TECHNICIAN AWARD

1<sup>st</sup> - Erik Barr,  
Goldcorp Canada, Porcupine Gold Mine

2<sup>nd</sup> - Tom Hopkins, FNX Mining Co.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Tim Danard  
Goldcorp Canada, Musselwhite Mine

### We need you!

If you have comments about the newsletter, or suggestions for future articles, please contact Susan Haldane at WSN, (705) 474-7233 ext. 261, or [susanhaldane@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:susanhaldane@workplacesafetynorth.ca)



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# 2010 AWARD WINNERS



**First Overall**  
**Goldcorp Canada**  
**Porcupine Gold Mine**



**Second Overall**  
**Barrick Gold**  
**Hemlo Mine**



**Technician Award**  
**1st - Erik Barr**  
**Goldcorp Canada**  
**Porcupine Gold Mine**



**Technician Award**  
**2nd - Tom Hopkins**  
**FNX Mining Co.**



**Technician Award**  
**3rd - Tim Danard**  
**Goldcorp Canada**  
**Musselwhite Mine**



**First Aid Award**  
**Xstrata Nickel**



**Firefighting Award**  
**Goldcorp Canada**  
**Porcupine Gold Mine**

Platinum Sponsors



**Special Equipment Award**  
**Barrick Gold**  
**Hemlo Mine**

Gold Sponsor



Silver Sponsor



# Competition Pictures



# 60 years of competitions

## Mine rescue pioneers recall early events

Credit Percy Smith for pushing the pebble that became Ontario's provincial mine rescue competition, down a hill.

Smith, the senior mine rescue officer, from 1947 to 1955 had the idea, said George McPhail, Smith's successor and someone who has staged a few competitions himself.

The first provincial competition in 1950, 60 years ago, was won by Pamour Porcupine Mines Ltd., but in a recent interview McPhail said the first ever competition occurred several years earlier with two teams from Inco's Frood Mine and a third from Creighton.

"It was in an open field and we had fences" to simulate where the drift led, said McPhail, who could not recall who won, but did recall feeling uncertainty about how the competitions would work and where they would lead.

"When we started we didn't know what we were going to do."

Smith, and later McPhail himself, got ideas for the competitions while visiting American competitions. McPhail was a regular visitor, not just in the United States, but at Canadian competitions.

Early competitions did not have multiple-choice quizzes, but did include a bench test, a task under oxygen, and competitors had to restore their apparatus, including recharging the oxygen cylinders.

The first time "I had to recharge them myself. It took three hours for four cylinders." McPhail quickly decided that was not going to happen again.

After several years, a decision was made to create a province-wide competition, so Smith and later McPhail and a crew of judges took to the road, to test mine rescue teams in their own communities. The tour would take weeks of exhausting travel by car.

"There was me and eight mine rescue officers or judges, one from each station," McPhail said. All were privy to the

challenge and the results, and "we all agreed to keep it secret."

Ron Eveson, who succeeded McPhail as Senior Mine Rescue Officer in 1977, recalled the first Timmins district competition in 1950 where he was a volunteer mine rescuer with Hollinger.

"The problem was a one-paragraph statement, given to the team captain upon completion of the field tests. The team was to travel through a fire door, take a CO test and return within a limited time," Eveson once wrote.

Eveson joined Ontario Mine Rescue in 1953 and earned a reputation of being a fierce competitor, training his Elliot Lake District teams to be regular favourites and provincial competition champions. He proudly proclaimed them to be "the Montreal Canadians of mine rescue."

"He was good," McPhail said, suggesting that the competitions sometimes caused friction between the two, but adding "we had some differences but we were good friends."

Eveson put an end to the travelling competition road show, getting mines to agree to hold the provincial event in one location. In 1979 district champions travelled to Timmins to face off on the same problem in the same location.

While the competition tour ended, Eveson as senior mine rescue officer continued to tour the province but this time after the provincial competition to debrief the teams. It's a practice Charlie Burton, as supervisor of mine rescue, continues.

Burton, who is now responsible for planning the provincial competition, brought his own innovation to the event, moving it underground for the first time ever in 2004 at NORCAT's Fecunis Mine. The competition returned to the underground training facility in 2008, and this year for the event's 60th anniversary to the Timmins Gold Mine Tour.



*Former senior mine rescue officers George McPhail, left, and Ron Eveson, right, were instrumental in building the Ontario Mine Rescue Competition.*

## Mine rescue mourns McPhail, Eveson

Just before this year's annual mine rescue competition, former senior mine rescue officer George McPhail (1955 to '77) passed away. Less than a month earlier his colleague and successor, Ron Eveson (1977 to '87) passed on.

Significant time has passed since their tenures at Ontario Mine Rescue, but their legacy endures especially for those mine rescuers who knew them, were trained by them or worked with them.

We would like to commemorate them and their outstanding contributions to Ontario Mine Rescue in the next issue of The Link Line.

If you have a memory, comment or photo about Ron or George that you would like to share, please take a few minutes to write them, any length is appropriate, and email them to [AlexGryska@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:AlexGryska@workplacesafetynorth.ca) or [KenSitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:KenSitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca).



The Xstrata Nickel mine rescue team demonstrated its firefighting skills at the Ontario Mine Rescue Competition in Timmins.

## Mine rescue teams stranded by outage

Continued from page 1

The team was forced to split into two groups when the Alimak was too small for the team and the casualty strapped into a stretcher. As the Alimak approached surface, a power outage occurred stranding the occupants helplessly in the lift and the remainder of the team in the drift for five minutes until power was restored.

In addition to finishing first overall, Porcupine Gold also earned the Firefighting Team Award for their demonstration of extinguishing wood, fuel and electrical fires. Xstrata Nickel won the First Aid Team Award, and Barrick Gold's Hemlo Mine won the Special Equipment Award.

Erik Barr, Porcupine Gold's technician, added to the team's silverware collection by winning the Equipment Technician Award. Tom Hopkins of FNX Mining placed second, and Tim Danard, of Goldcorp Canada Musselwhite Mine, placed third.

This year's competition was co-hosted by Goldcorp Canada Porcupine Gold Mine, Xstrata Copper and Lake Shore Gold Corp. Drager Safety and Technica Mining were platinum sponsors. De Beers Canada Victor Mine was a gold sponsor, and Acklands Grainger was a silver sponsor.

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