



Link Line



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

Issue #6 July 2008

Xstrata Nickel Mine Rescuers Win Gold



Mine rescuers from Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine struck gold at the Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Sudbury, winning three of the four team categories including the Overall Competition Award.

Mine rescuers from Xstrata Nickel Fraser/TL Mine mined deep at the 58th Ontario Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Sudbury in June to win three of four team categories, including the coveted gold helmets as the Overall Competition winners.

Xstrata Nickel mine rescuers, the Onaping District champions, and their competitors, champions from each of the other five districts, had to search NORCAT's Fecunis Mine Training

Centre, near Onaping, to find three miners reported missing when a fire broke out, filling most of the mine with smoke.

Teams quickly found an electrician, suffering a suspected broken femur from a fall, on a narrow catwalk five metres above the stope level, and after stabilizing the victim carefully navigated his stretcher along the catwalks, down a steep raise and out to surface.

2008 Mine Rescue Competitions

And the Winners are:

Firefighting team award

Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine

First Aid team award

Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine

Special Equipment award (Tie)

Compass Minerals, Sifto and Hemlo Operations

Equipment Technician

3rd - Richard Gilbert, FNX Mining Co.
2nd - Derrick Parsons, Vale Inco, East Mine
1st - Norm Begin, Hemlo Operations

Overall Winners

2nd - Vale Inco, East Mines
1st - Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine

Teams resumed the search for the two remaining miners, but first found a scooptram fire. After deploying a fire hose and discovering there was inadequate water pressure to extinguish the fire, teams returned to the surface for a new piece of mine rescue equipment – the RRU-30 foam generator.

After extinguishing the fire, rescuers resumed their search, finally

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We need you!

If you have comments about the newsletter, or suggestions for future articles, please contact Susan Haldane at MASHA, (705) 474-7233 ext. 261, or susanhaldane@masha.on.ca



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discovering the missing men, one slumped unconscious in the operator's seat of a scissor lift and suffering minor burns to his arms, the second physically unharmed but in a state of anxiety in a portable oxygen tent.

Teams may have heaved a sigh of relief after reaching surface with the final victims to the applause of onlookers, but their work was not complete. En route to the Sudbury Mine Rescue Station, teams had to shift back into rescue mode when they were advised to respond to an emergency at Alertec training facility in Azilda.

A worker wearing fall arrest had fallen off a five-storey building and was hanging by his safety lanyard about 15 metres above ground. Teams had to conduct a pickoff rescue using GripTech Rope Rescue equipment, lowering a team member down the side of the building to recover the victim, and then lowering both to the ground.



Xstrata Nickel mine rescuers, winners of the Firefighting Award at the Provincial Mine Rescue Competition, receive instructions on how to use the RRU 30 foam generator.

Xstrata Nickel, in addition to winning the overall competition, also won the Team Firefighting and the Team First Aid Awards.

Hemlo Operations and Compass Minerals, Sifto Canada blocked

Xstrata Nickel from sweeping the team awards by tying to win the Special Team Equipment Award.

Norm Begin, of Hemlo Operations won the Equipment Technician Award for the third consecutive year. Technicians Derrick Parsons, of Vale Inco East Mine, and Richard Gilbert, of FNX Mining Co., placed second and third respectively.

Hemlo was also presented with the John T. Ryan Safety Trophy for Ontario, an award administered by the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum and presented to the metal mine with the lowest incidence of medical aid injuries.

Mine rescuers from Hemlo Operations returned home from the Provincial Mine Rescue Competition with their hands full. The mine won the John T. Ryan Safety Trophy, tied with Compass Minerals, Sifto Canada for the Special Equipment Award, and mine rescue technician Norm Begin won his third consecutive Equipment Technician Award.



Retirement Beckons the OXY SR-45

Retirement looms this fall for a mainstay of more than 35 years for Ontario Mine Rescue - the OXY SR-45.

When manufacturer Drager Safety stopped making parts for the

OXY SR-45 in 2006, Ontario Mine Rescue purchased enough spare parts to keep its inventory of about 100 units operating for two years, said Charlie Burton, mine rescue program supervisor.

The 45-minute self-rescuer, brought into service in 1971, served as a backup to a rescue team's breathing apparatus, originally the BG174 and in recent years the

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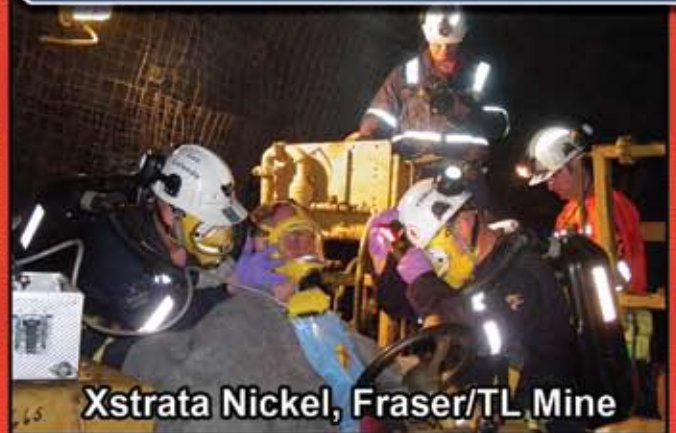
2008 Award Winners

Firefighting Team Award



Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine

First Aid Team Award



Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine

Special Equipment Award (Tie)



Compass Minerals - Sifto



Hemlo Operations

Equipment Technician Award



1st - Norm Begin,
Hemlo Operations



2nd - Derrick Parsons,
Vale Inco, East Mine



3rd - Richard Gilbert,
FNX Mining Co.

Overall Winners



1st - Xstrata Nickel, Fraser/TL Mine



2nd - Vale Inco, East Mines



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Retirement beckons the OXY SR-45

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BG4, and as breathing apparatus for conscious and unconscious victims.

The newest units were purchased in the mid-1980s, said Burton, noting that though they've been well-maintained and rebuilt as necessary, the lack of spare parts means the OXY SR-45 must be replaced.

Rescue teams will now carry an SSR-90 M as a backup to their BG4s and as a breathing apparatus for conscious victims. Ontario Mine Rescue has rebuilt about 80 SSR-90 M units, which were purchased in 1989 and 1990, to replace the OXY SR-45s in mine rescue substations.

The CAREvent DRA Automatic Rescue Ventilator, acquired several years ago, will serve as a breathing apparatus for unconscious victims.

Not down to the last breath, but nearing the last spare part, Ontario Mine Rescue's OXY SR-45 will be retired from service later this year, two years after Drager stopped making parts for the respirator.

Reserve Space for Lunchtime Reading

Keep a space open in your lunchbox or back pocket for a revised and updated Handbook of Training in Mine Rescue and Recovery Operations, soon to be in the works.

Work is under way on the 12th revision since the book's introduction in 1930, and the first since 2001, said Alex Gryska, Ontario Mine Rescue manager.

The handbook contains technical information on equipment and procedures, and is used to augment course materials that mine rescuers receive during training. The revision process will ensure that the handbook, regarded as a mine rescue essential not only in Ontario but internationally, "continues to serve the needs of our rescuers," said Gryska. "We're going to work closely with our technical advisory committee to make that happen." The committee will advise MASHA on content.

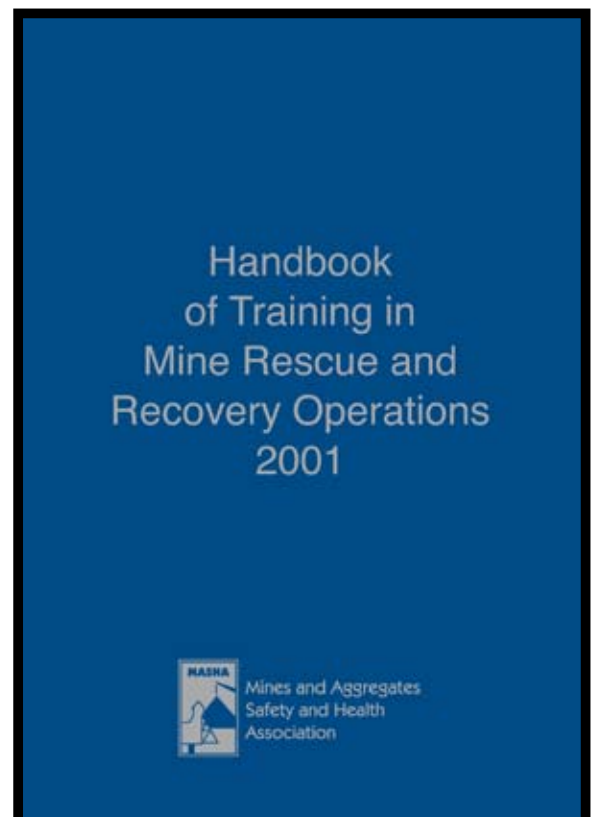
The book will reflect the changes that have occurred in mine rescue since the last edition, not only in equipment, but in training approaches and in current mine rescue concerns, he said. Mine rescuers can expect a section on equipment in current use, though possibly not as detailed as the existing section, as well as new sections on emergency preparedness and heat stress, covering fitness, hydration and nutrition.

These are topics that are attracting greater concern and are of growing importance, he said.

Since training courses now include participant manuals, leader's guides and other support materials, and no longer rely solely on the handbook as their text, "strategic decisions will have to be made on what will and won't be in the handbook," Gryska said.

"We can't put it all in or it won't be a handbook."

The handbook will be restructured slightly to make it easier to update and revise future editions, and keep pace with the changes in equipment and information that are occurring at a more frequent rate.



One thing likely won't change. In discussions with mine rescuers, book size is one topic on which there is broad consensus, Gryska said.

"They want something that will fit into their lunchbox or back pocket" for a quick reference or convenient study.

30-Year Service Award Recipients

▶ To acknowledge long-serving mine rescuers who have made significant contributions to the on-going development and success of Ontario Mine Rescue, MASHA with the support of Xstrata Nickel Mines at the annual provincial competition honoured five mine rescuers with 30 or more years of service.

Doug Trahan (30 years)

– Although no longer actively involved in mine rescue competitions, Doug currently works as underground supervisor at Xstrata Nickel's Fraser Mine where he has been the captain of a team for several years, receives regular training and responds to fire and non-fire emergencies at the Fraser and Craig mines. Doug joined Ontario Mine Rescue while working at mines in Elliot Lake in 1978. He also volunteers with his local fire department and competes in provincial first aid competitions, having won three.

Ernie Sapinski (31 years)

– Ernie received his first mine rescue training in 1977 from Joe McInnis and Art Russell while studying engineering technology at the Haileybury School of Mines. Still an active responder, Ernie works in Xstrata Copper Kidd Mine's engineering department where he has been an active rescuer since 1978 and has competed in more than 15 district and six provincial competitions. In 1995, Ernie received the Gabe Larouch Award for outstanding service and dedication to the mine rescue program.

Mike Gilles (36 years)

– For Mike, mine rescue is a family affair. Mike's father was a mine rescuer who responded to the McIntyre Fire in Timmins in 1965 and Mike's son, Kurtis, is a mine rescuer with Vale Inco and was on last year's provincial winning team from East Mines. Mike followed his dad's footsteps and entered mine rescue in 1971 while employed by



Collectively with more than 160 years of mine rescue experience, from left, Jamie Mortson, Doug Trahan, Ernie Sapinski, Gilbert Wahl, and Mike Gilles were each honoured at the Provincial Mine Rescue Competition for contributing 30 or more years of service to Ontario Mine Rescue.

Inco. Mike was on the 1994 provincial winning team from Inco. Mike has been general foreman at Inco since 1990 and continues to be an active mine rescue volunteer although he no longer actively competes.

Gilbert Wahl (35 years)

– Gilbert trained under Ron Eveson while employed by the Algoma Ore Division in Wawa in 1973, and was on Algoma's provincial winning teams in 1975 and 1978. Gilbert has been employed at numerous Ontario mines in capacities ranging from miner to safety coordinator, and is now safety/security director at Wesdome Gold Mines where he actively trains with his mine rescue teams. Gilbert also represents the Algoma District on MASHA's Mine Rescue Technical Advisory Committee.

Jamie Mortson (30 years)

– Jamie entered mine rescue in 1978 while at Dome Mine and was the recipient of the Archie K. Graham Award for outstanding rookie at the Timmins District competition. Jamie competed for 20 years, representing his mines at six provincials and was a member of Dome's provincial winning team in 1992. Now employed by Dumas Contracting as manager of safety and training, Jamie continues to actively train in mine rescue. Jamie received the Gabe Larouch Award in 2001 for outstanding service and dedication to the mine rescue program. A member of MASHA's Mine Rescue Technical Advisory Committee for many years, Jamie served as the First Aid Competition Chairman in the Timmins District for more than 25 years.

Thank You for Twenty Years of Service!

Doug Camsell, Onaping District
Bryan Wilson, Onaping District
Terry Dubois, Onaping District
Al Henzy, Southern Ontario District

An Invitation for a Pint of Guinness

Mine rescuers from Ireland reached out to Ontario mine rescuers with a special presentation, a miner's lamp to symbolize the friendship between the two groups, at the 58th annual provincial competition in Sudbury.

Joe Rice, spokesman for the team from Boliden Tara Mines, winners of this year's All Ireland and United Kingdom Mine Rescue Competition, presented the lamp to Mine Rescue Program Supervisor Charlie Burton.

After noting that Ontario's Handbook of Training in Mine Rescue and Recovery Operations is their bible and the people mentioned in it – specifically Burton and administrative

assistant Isabella Caron – their gods, Rice invited an Ontario team to visit them next year.

Boliden Tara Mines in Meath County, about 50 kilometres from Dublin, is the largest zinc mine in Europe with about 700 employees. They also mine lead. A team from Boliden Tara competed at the 1999 provincial competition on a demonstration basis.



Mine rescuers from Boliden Tara Mines in Ireland, special guests at this year's Provincial Mine Rescue Competition, extended an invitation to Ontario mine rescuers to drop in for a visit next year.

Competition Pictures



Five Years and Counting

Still an infant in service compared to its predecessor, Drager Safety's BG4 will mark its fifth anniversary as Ontario Mine Rescue's main breathing apparatus this fall.

Despite its lighter weight, positive pressure oxygen feed and air cooler, the BG4 was not universally welcomed in 2003 as a replacement for the tried and proved BG174, which had well-served Ontario mine rescuers for almost 40 years.

With its "space age plastics" and carbon fibre case, "mine rescuers were skeptical that the units would be reliable and durable enough," said Charlie Burton, mine rescue program supervisor.

"But it didn't take long for them to realize it was an excellent breathing apparatus. It was pretty much a seamless transition."

The purchase confirmed the long-term relationship between Ontario Mine Rescue and Drager, the manufacturer of the BG174 and a platinum sponsor of this year's provincial mine rescue competition in Sudbury.

After the purchase Ontario Mine Rescue and Drager cooperated to develop a participant manual for the BG4 training program in this province. The manual has been since licensed for use in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories and other mining jurisdictions.

The BG174 was introduced in 1966 and remained virtually unchanged in design and accessories by the time it was phased out in 2003. But Ontario Mine Rescue and Drager are continuing to work together to bring innovative improvements to the new apparatus.

"We're assisting them in developing a hydration mask for the BG4," that will allow rescuers to sip water while under oxygen, Burton said.

Battle Against Heat Stress

The mask would be a valuable tool in the battle against heat stress, a concern attracting interest and research from mine rescue organizations around the world.

Drager and Ontario Mine Rescue are also working to improve mine rescue communications by developing mask-installed radios. One is a line-of-sight radio for rescue teams on assignment, and a second is a push-to-talk radio for leaky feeder radio systems to keep the captain in immediate contact with the briefing officer on the surface.

While these upgrades are still in development, mine rescuers will be introduced soon to the Sentinel, a new electronic monitoring system for the BG4. Ontario Mine Rescue has purchased 100 units, and next year will begin a four-year phase-in of the new system to replace the Monitron.

While the Sentinel fulfills the same basic function as the Monitron to monitor the oxygen supply, it offers several advances for mine rescuers, including measuring the oxygen supply in minutes based on the wearer's breathing rate, calculating the wearer's absorbed body temperature – an indicator of heat stress, and a "man down" alarm.

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