



AVON FIRE & RESCUE

Magazine

Issue two 2010

For employees of Avon Fire & Rescue Service



Inside this issue



**Avon fronts
national campaign**



**Students look to
improve equipment**



**Disaster talks
for Haiti volunteer**



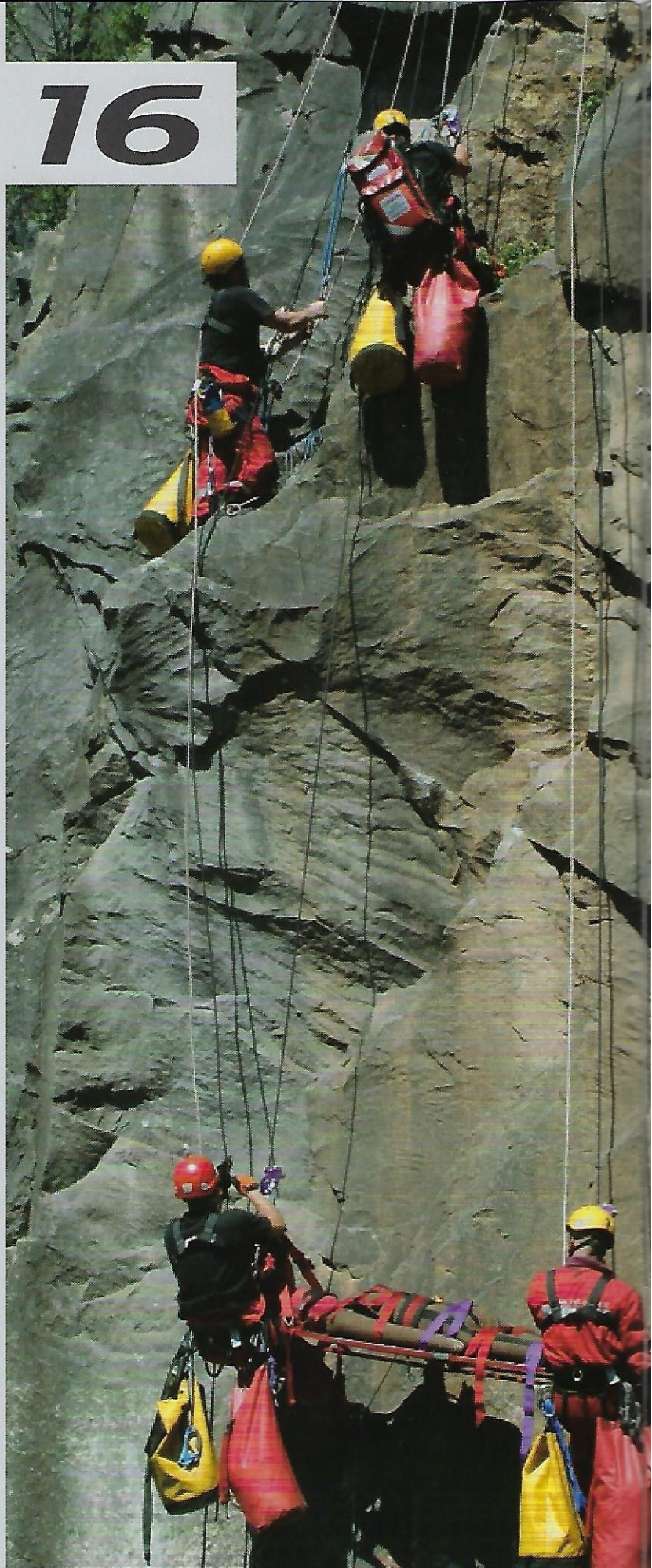
From the Chief

I would be surprised if anyone had failed to notice the stunning front cover image on this edition. That shot is from the Severn Park Fire & Rescue Training Centre and was just one of a series of superb photos taken in Avon as part of a photography project commissioned by Communities and Local Government (CLG).

We were approached at the start of the year to host a series of shoots for the professional photography team. These images are due to be used as part of a national photo library which all fire and rescue services will be able to access. The resource will allow FRSs to select images to demonstrate the work we all do.

It is fantastic that Avon Fire & Rescue Service should be chosen as a case study for this unique showcase and I'm grateful to all those who assisted in any way to make the project so successful. The photographs capture the wide diversity of work we do and I'm delighted that your hard work will be given national prominence.

Kevin Pearson
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive



Lining up to descend into action
Celebrating 20 years since line rescue began



recycle

This magazine is printed using recycled paper and vegetable inks

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If you would like to have your say on the Magazine or contribute an article, please contact the Media & Communication Team by calling 0117 926 2061, extension 390, or email magazine@avonfire.gov.uk

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The Magazine is written, designed and published by Creative Services, HQ, Temple Back, Bristol, BS1 6EU.

INCIDENTS & COMMUNITY EVENTS &



Electrical fault sparks attic blaze

Monday 7 June

Copse Road, Knowle, Bristol

The roof of a terraced house was badly damaged after an electrical fault started a fire in the attic.

Firefighters prevented the fire from spreading further into the house and to adjoining properties.



Photograph courtesy of David Kirkpatrick

Building badly damaged in blaze

Sunday 7 March

Wilson Street, St Paul's, Bristol

Crews from around the service were brought in during a protracted incident which saw fire destroy the roof of a five storey building.

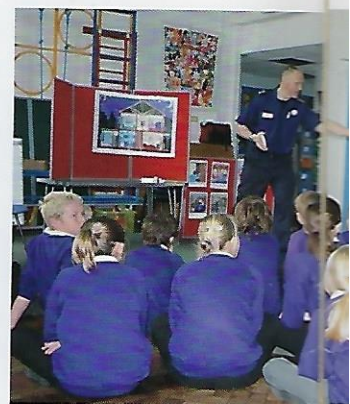
Cat rescued from roof

Sunday 28 March

Brock Street, Bath

Firefighters came to the aid of a cat which had been trapped on the roof of a building for more than four days.

Faced with the option of being carried to safety or falling, the feline plucked for the latter – fortunately it landed safely on a salvage sheet.



Supermarket gutted in fire

Thursday 24 June

Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol

Fire crews spent considerable time cutting away and digging out sections of a supermarket roof following a fire at the store.

The fire, caused by an electrical fault, was discovered shortly after staff had arrived for work.



Firefighters visit winners of sticker competition

Friday 7 May

St Stephen's Primary School, Kingswood

Young designers were presented with certificates by their local fire crews after winning a schools' competition to design stickers promoting seat belt safety and car safety seats.



Kingswood stages child car seat event

Monday 24 May

Kingswood Fire Station

A child car safety event held at Kingswood found faults in eight out of ten car seats. AF&RS teamed up with Mothercare, Britax, South Gloucestershire Council's Road Safety Team and Avon and Somerset Constabulary for the event.



Fire hits health club

Thursday 27 May

Alexandra Road, Clevedon

A health club was forced out of action after fire broke out in a sauna area and spread to the roof void. Crews confined the fire to an end section of the building.



Sparks visit for Pensford pupils

Tuesday 11 May

Pensford Primary School, Pensford

Youngsters from a primary school were keen to share their fire safety knowledge with firefighters during a Sparks visit.

UNITY EVENTS &



Advice for surgery patients

Friday 28 May

Brockway Surgery, Nailsea

Patients from a Nailsea GP surgery were able to gain advice from their local firefighters and sign up for Home Fire Safety Visits during a series of events at the practice.

Retirements

By the summer we'd said farewell to five senior members of staff who have all hung up their helmets for the final time.



John Dando

Assistant Chief Fire Officer **John Dando** retired in February drawing to a close a 30 year career with Avon. John joined in 1979 as a firefighter at Patchway Fire Station and during his time with the service worked at a number of stations as he was promoted through the ranks.

He held posts in Community Safety, Service Delivery, Training, Technical Services and Press and Public Relations on his way to becoming ACFO in 2007.

Three Group Managers also said farewell to friends and colleagues this year.

Alongside his AF&RS commitments, **Chris Millard** is a keen and active supporter of Gambia and Avon Fire Services in Partnership (GAFSIP). As a trainer for Gambian firefighters, he visited the country on several occasions and is now a trustee of the charity.

Robin Manners retired as the Group Manager for North Somerset on the 30th anniversary of his first day with the service.



Robin Manners

Robin spent much of his early career at Bedminster Fire Station and also spent five years as the Divisional Officer at Severn Park Fire & Rescue Training Centre.



Kevin Keeler

Group Manager **Kevin Keeler** retired as the Unitary Manager for Bristol. Kevin joined AF&RS in January 2005 from Tyne and Wear FRS where he had worked since 1985.



Malcolm Jenkins

Station Manager **Malcolm Jenkins** retired in April after 31 years with AF&RS. He served stints at a number of stations before working as the Station Manager within the Arson Task Force and was one of our most experienced fire investigation officers.

Also headed for the new pastures of retirement this summer were: Ff **Steven Box**, CM **John Couzins**, Ff **Andrew Chappell**, WM **Phil Hale**, WM **David Hayward** and CM **Dave Puddy**. This year **Bob Fraser** from Technical Services also brought to a close a 46 year career in the fire and rescue service both as a firefighter and member of support staff.

CFO/CE Kevin Pearson said: "This year we have said farewell to some much valued and experienced members of staff. There is no doubt they will all leave a big hole in terms of their personalities and expertise, but I thank them all for their many years of hard work and wish them all the best in their new lives."



Chris Millard



Pedal power clocks up over £1,500 for charity

Two Southmead firefighters have taken to their bikes to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity.

John Rides and Tom Tyler, who are both on Red Watch at Southmead, were joined by John's wife Becs for the Newbury Magnificat, which took place in June.

The cycling event saw the trio pedal 127 miles from Newbury Racecourse, through Berkshire and Hampshire and over the South Downs.

Tom set the pace and secured the silver award and Becs, after eight and a half hours of cycling, missed a silver by just eight minutes. John was just content with his 'thanks for coming' badge.

The team finished the challenge in nine hours and 11 minutes and were all exhausted, but thankfully injury free, at the end.

Speaking about the challenge, John said: "We put in a great effort with all three of us riding 17 miles further than we have ever cycled before. We managed to raise a none too shabby total of £1,692 for The Fire Fighters Charity."





GOVERNMENT LOOKS TO AVON FOR NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The work of AF&RS is set to gain national exposure following the completion of a Government photography project.

Communities and Local Government (CLG), the department responsible for the UK fire and rescue service, is creating a huge online library of images. The pictures are due to be made available through the CLG's internet pages, providing a stock of images representing the work of the UK fire and rescue services.

Earlier this year AF&RS agreed to act as a case study by hosting a photography team commissioned by the CLG.

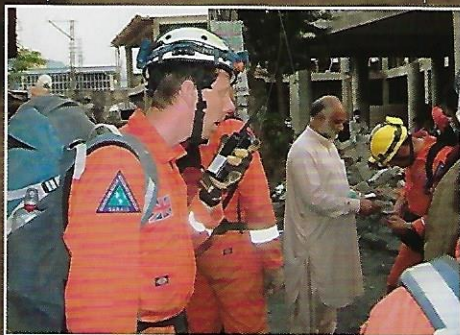


London based professional photographer Conor Masterson led the team during their five day shoot. With a series of exhibitions and advertising campaigns on his CV he came with a keen eye for detail and a clear brief.

More than 10 separate shoots were organised during the course of the week, covering everything from station life and operational appliances, to training and community safety.

As well as appearing on the CLG's library the images will also be used around AF&RS in future displays, posters and leaflets.

Thank you to the following staff members and locations involved: Bath and Temple Blue Watch, safety boat crew from Bath White Watch, Bristol Community Safety, Control Green Watch, Nailsea RDS firefighters, Severn Park Fire & Rescue Training Centre, South West Command Development Centre, Speedwell Green and White watches, Urban Search and Rescue team, hovercraft crew from Weston-super-Mare White Watch and Yate Community Safety.



Rob Davis, Group Manager from People Development and Paul Incledon from USAR played a crucial role in the search and rescue effort following the Haiti earthquake in February. Now Rob (pictured above), is spreading the word around the world about their experiences.

Going global in a crisis

In January a massive earthquake struck the Caribbean island of Haiti killing thousands of people.

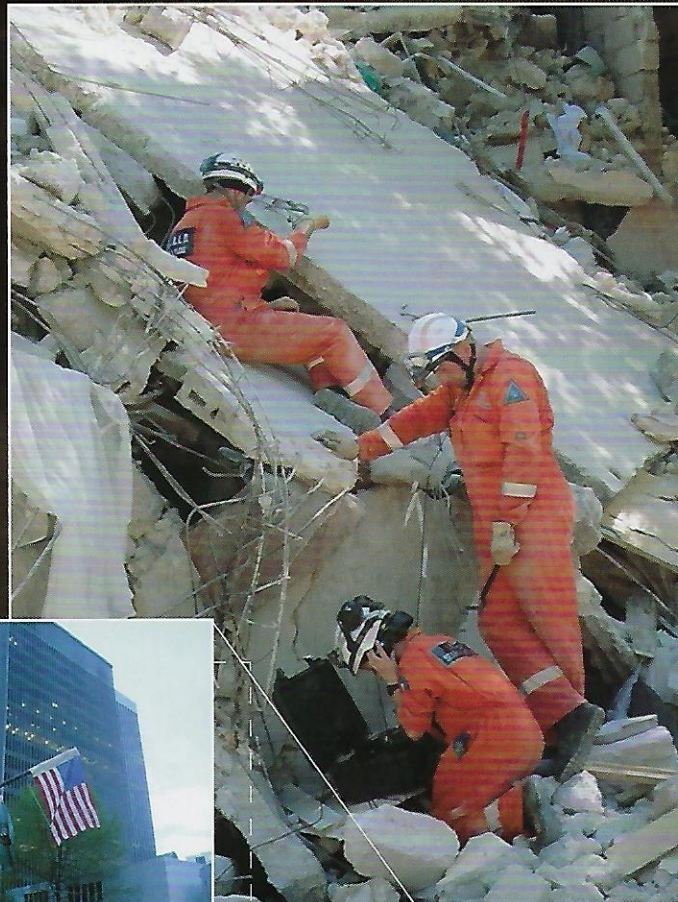
As part of their role as volunteers for the charity Search and Rescue Assistance in Disasters (SARAID), Rob and Paul were called on to help.

Several months on, many people have forgotten about Haiti, but not Rob who has been travelling all over the world to share his experiences.

He was approached by World Vision to attend the International Community on

Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management (ISCRAM) conference in Seattle. Rob gave a presentation on command and control procedures during the search and rescue operation, as World Vision is keen to develop similar procedures for the humanitarian side of relief efforts.

Rob said: "It was a very interesting few days with people from all over the world attending. It really raised my awareness of the depth of technology out there to assist in emergency response, which will be of benefit to both AF&RS and SARAID.



Photos by SARAI D

"If we have a problem with one of the information systems we use we can ask ISCRAM to fund and research the issue at no cost to either organisation."

Since his return from Haiti Rob has also attended the United Nations (UN) debrief on the search and rescue operation in Geneva, where both the positive and negative aspects of the operation were discussed.

Rob said: "One of the main problems was that some of the teams were working outside the UN guidelines, meaning they were putting their own safety at risk. An aftershock

measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale, had the potential to place the teams in further danger.

"But one of the really positive aspects of the operation was the use of Mapaction intelligence, which is like a very high quality Google map. This provided teams with before and after high quality photographs of the country, meaning we could see what the buildings looked like prior to the collapse."

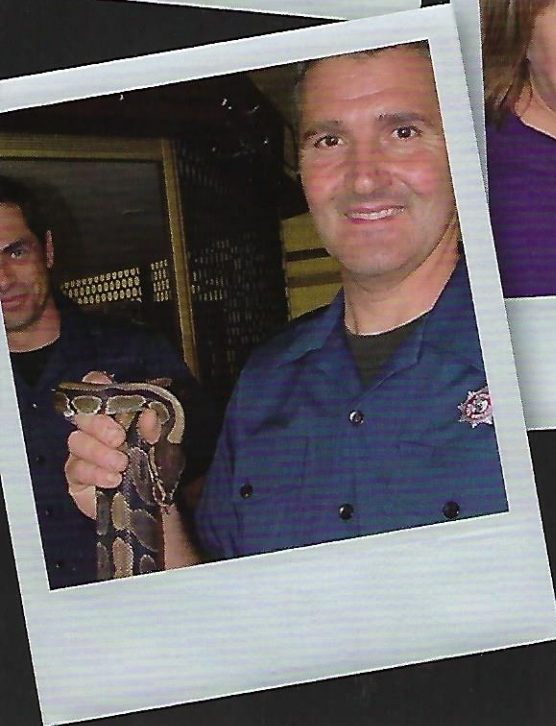
SARAI D is now working with many countries at risk of natural disasters, such as flooding, earthquakes and

tsunami, to train their civil defence teams in rescue techniques and first aid.

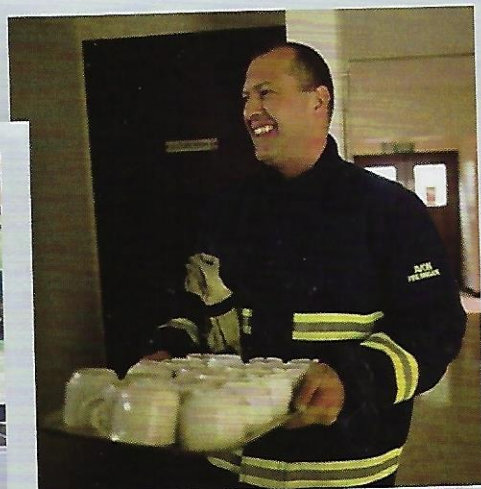
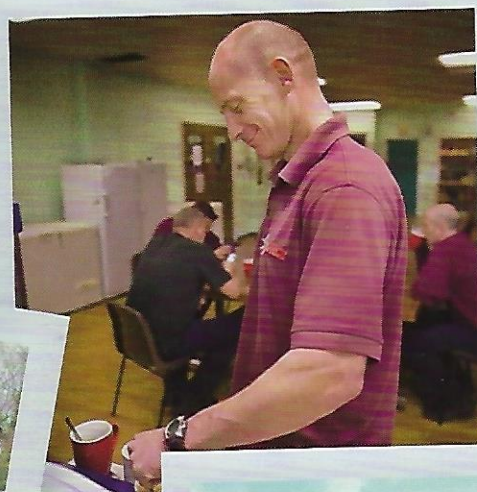
Rob said: "I find the pre-disaster work we do more rewarding than the post disaster work as this enables resilience at community level.

"We want to build SARAI D teams in communities and give them the equipment and knowledge they need to save lives. The first 24 hours after a disaster are crucial and often it can take the international community several days to be mobilised so this area of work is vital."

Rogues G

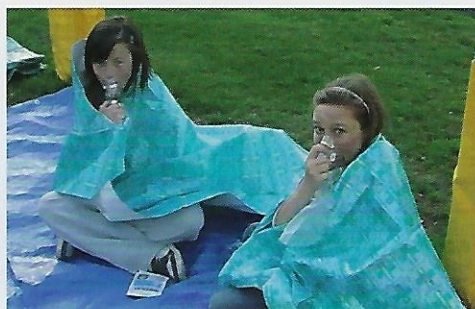


s Gallery



Making up

Thornbury crews use some theatrical licence to bring realism to Operation Burnout



All too often training exercises can seem sterile affairs, far removed from the adrenalin of a real incident.

But while planning an exercise to test Thornbury firefighters, Crew Manager Dave Mead called on some professional help to add spice to their breathing apparatus (BA) drill. The scenario facing ten firefighters from the station was a blaze at the local rugby club, with four persons reported.

When crews arrived they soon knew this was no ordinary exercise as they were met with

a badly burned girl who had been caught up in the fire. A search by eight BA wearers then found two further live casualties with serious burns to their arms and neck.

In fact teenagers Shannon Hawkins, Grace Linehan, and Temple Firefighter James Linehan's apparently horrific burns were the work of two talented make up artists.

Helena Bartley and Jessica Mills took time out from their college make up course to put their skills to good use to help with Operation Burnout. The

pair spent over an hour creating the realistic burns, including a dramatic scar down James' arm.

During the exercise firefighters carried out a search of the building, rescuing the three live casualties and a dummy.

Crew Manager Dave Mead said: "I'd like to thank everyone who took part and helped make the exercise such a great success. Thanks to the rugby club for the venue, Jess and Helena for their professional make up skills and to all the casualties and crews from Thornbury for their enthusiasm and hard work."

Innovation Creation

Engineers of the future have been using their innovation skills to suggest improvements to the way AF&RS works.

A group of second year engineering students at the University of the West of England (UWE) have been working with the Technical Services Team to come up with potential improvements to equipment used by AF&RS.

Each group was asked to look at one of the following areas: swift water rescue, the Environmental Response Unit (ERU) and breathing apparatus (BA).

They were invited to spend time with the Technical Services Team and discuss where improvements could be made. They joined Watch Manager Vince Green to look at a more efficient propeller guard for the Bath boat and discussed a new trolley for carrying BA cylinders on the ERU with Watch Manager Chris Geake.

The students opted to design a device called The Physiological Monitoring System, which monitors the effects of heat on the body of BA wearers.

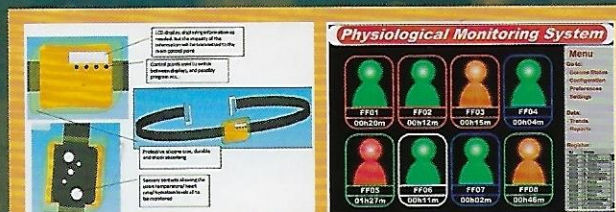
During the nine month project the students developed an idea for a belt which could be worn as part of a BA set to provide information about the wearer's heart rate, temperature,

posture, breathing rate and activity levels.

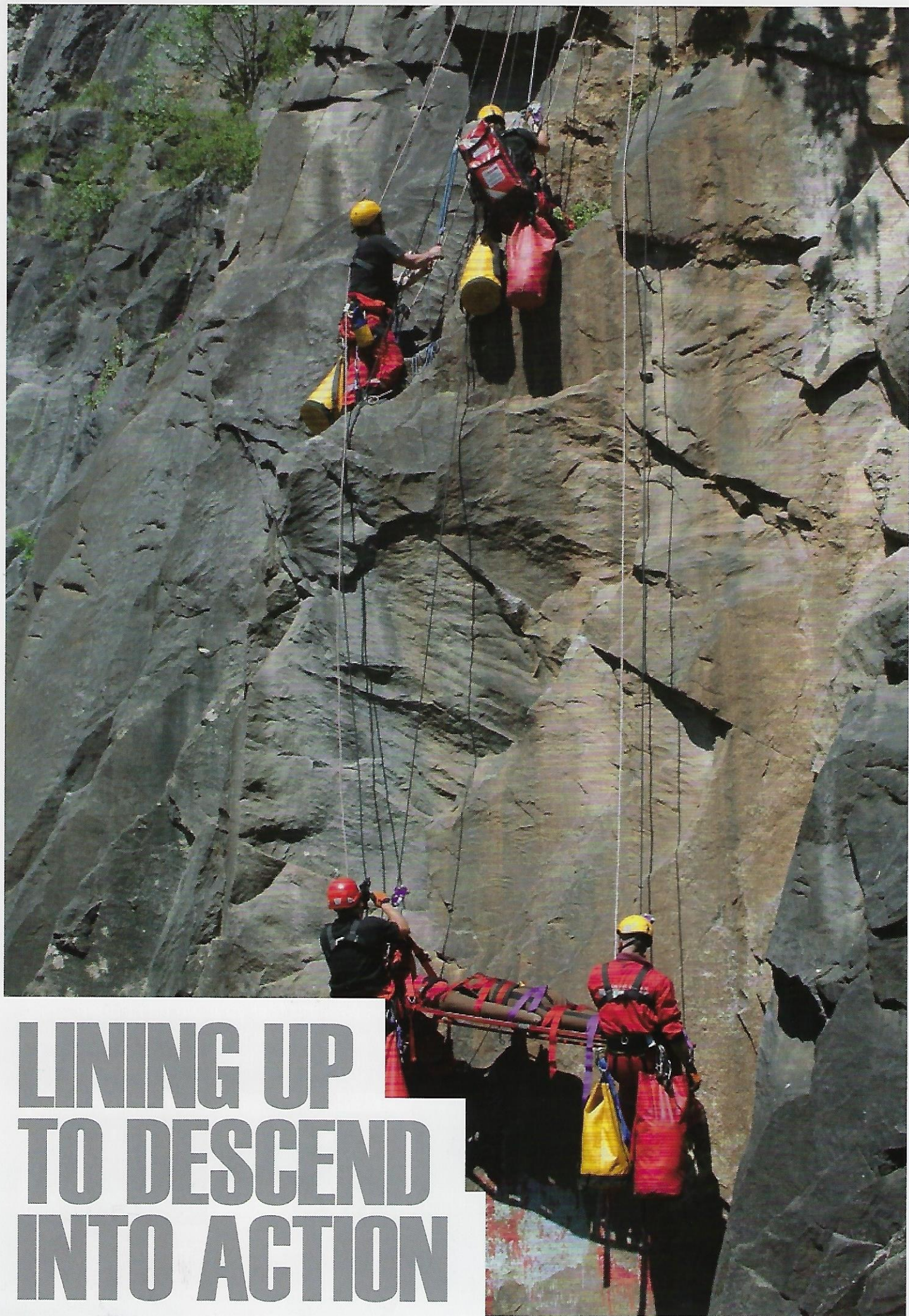
Station Manager Jim Wemyss and WM Vince Green were invited to the presentation, where the students outlined their final idea.

Jim said: "This is a really well thought out concept and something we could look to introduce at AF&RS in the future. It would be very useful to have this kind of information about our BA teams available, so that if they have a problem we can pull them out of a building quickly.

"This was the first year we have been involved in a project like this, but I am hoping we will be invited back to UWE next year."



Above: The group's final design of the Physiological Monitoring system.



LINING UP TO DESCEND INTO ACTION

It's 20 years since line rescue was first introduced at AF&RS. Here we take a look back at how it all began...

It was back in 1987 when the idea of Troll rope rescue equipment was first discussed by the then County of Avon Fire Brigade, but it took three years for the equipment and techniques to go fully on the run.

During that time line rescue instructors were trained, the different types of equipment options explored and exercises took place at the Avon Gorge, Portbury Dock and Uphill.

With all the preparations in place, line rescue was due to go on the run in December 1990. But the first rescue using the new equipment actually took place a month earlier.

Control received a call to say a woman had fallen over the cliff at Sand Bay, in Weston-super-Mare, and was in danger due to the rising tide. Crews were mobilised and the new team's first rescue was successfully carried out.

In the early years the line rescue team dealt with a range of incidents including two people who

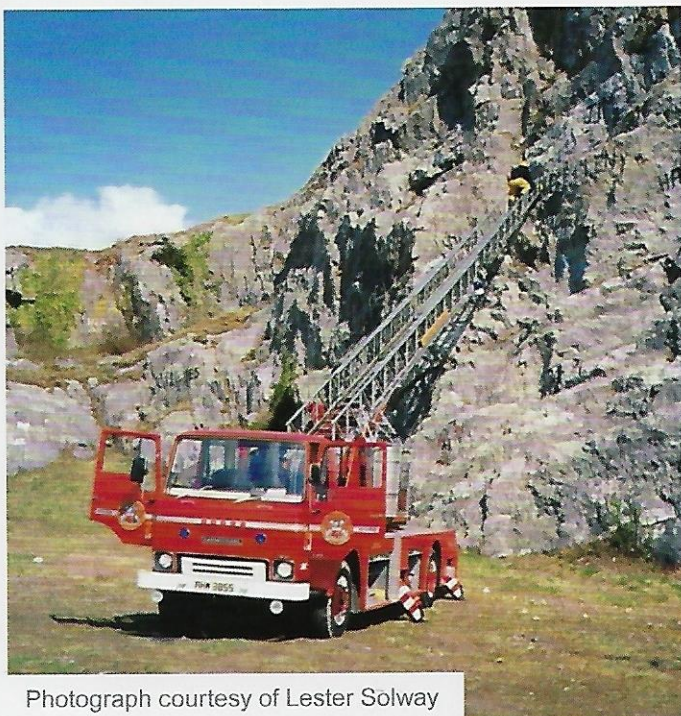
had fallen from a maintenance cradle on the Old Severn Bridge.

In 1993 crews also assisted Avon and Somerset Constabulary with the snatch rescue of a man threatening to jump from the Sea Walls onto the Portway in Bristol. Fortunately the swift actions of two firefighters saved the man's life.

As line rescue was still very new, not many fire services had the equipment. Avon teamed up with East Sussex Fire Brigade to share practices, discuss equipment options, and take part in joint exercises on 280ft high cliffs and telephone masts.

Today Avon has a dedicated line rescue team and vehicle based at Temple Fire Station and over the last 20 years has responded to a range of emergencies including rescuing climbers, assisting walkers and dogs who have slipped on cliffs, builders stuck in lift shafts and a worker trapped in a silo at a quarry.

LINE RESCUE OVER THE YEARS



Photograph courtesy of Lester Solway



Making a difference

When USAR technician Dawn Wright responded to an advert from Refugee Action on our Intranet, she discovered how rewarding being a volunteer mentor could be.

Some people who have been forced to leave their native land often will have done so with little or no warning. Their arrival in an unfamiliar country, with different customs and systems, can bring with it many barriers.

Refugee Action provides support to refugees and asylum seekers. One of the ways the charity does this is through its mentoring scheme which helps refugees during their first year in the UK. This can involve helping with education, looking for employment and integrating into society.

Dawn (pictured right) said: "I'm very fortunate – I have a good job, family and friends and when I read some of the terrible stories of people the charity has helped, I wanted to do something."

Having been through the interview stage and training, Dawn, like all the charity's mentors, was matched with someone who the organisation thought she would get on well with.

Since February Dawn has been regularly meeting up with Hanan, a 20-year old from Ethiopia, who arrived in the UK around a year ago and currently works as a cleaner.

When Hanan came to the UK she spoke little English, but regular classes at college, and support from Dawn has meant that she is making good progress.

"I see Hanan for about two hours a week," said Dawn.

"During our sessions we work on any English phrases and pronunciation she is having trouble with, or working on more formal aspects of language, such as writing letters and emails.

"We have also been looking towards the future for when Hanan passes her English exams, such as working on her CV and organising volunteering work."

Official mentoring of Hanan was set to end in the summer, said Dawn. "We get on really well and we plan to continue meeting up in the

future. I have found this a really rewarding and enjoyable experience."



What is the difference between an asylum seeker and a refugee?

An asylum seeker will have fled their homeland and on arrival in another country made themselves known to the authorities and exercised their legal right to asylum.

They become a refugee when they have proved they would face persecution back home and

have had their asylum application approved. This means they are legally allowed to live and work in this country.

For more information on Refugee Action, visit www.refugee-action.org.uk

A WORLD CUP GAMBLE WORTH TAKING ?

Football fans targeted with summer cooking safety message

As it turned out there wasn't much to cheer about on the pitch at this year's World Cup....unless you were a Spain fan!

But despite the disappointing performance from Steven Gerrard and co. the excitement of the early stages of the tournament was used to promote an important safety message.

More than 50% of all accidental house fires we attend start in the kitchen, many as a result of cooking being left unattended.

Crews often see cases where people have come home after a few drinks out, put food in the oven, under the grill or on the hob and then fallen asleep. The predictable result is of course a fire breaking

out in the kitchen, filling the home with toxic smoke.

In a bid to ensure World Cup revellers took particular care, a poster and leaflet campaign was targeted at pubs, bars and other venues.

The campaign was based around a series of light-hearted posters displaying genuine World Cup betting odds, compared against the odds of a drunk football fan accidentally setting fire to their kitchen.

Station Manager Andy Southard said: "The posters were designed to make drinkers smile, but they delivered a really important and potentially life saving message.

"Most of our crews will be able to tell stories of waking up and rescuing drinkers from their smoke filled homes, often after they have slept through bleeping smoke alarms or concerned neighbours banging on the door."



Above: If only... The posters used genuine betting odds.

FIRE APPLIANCES – 70s STYLE

Avon has been home to many fire appliances over the years, take a look at our selection from 1978 and see how they compare with those you are familiar with now.

The photographs have been sent in by Weston-super-Mare-based fire service enthusiast Lester Solway, who has been photographing appliances and incidents for many years.



Appliances line up at A5 Patchway.

Dodge Angus

The Dodge Angus WrL (Water Tender Ladder) was based at C1 Weston-super-Mare. Like those used today, water tender ladders replaced the wheeled escape, carrying a three section 45 foot, or 13.5 metre, ladder. The appliance is pictured attending a special service call on Weston-super-Mare beach.



HCB Angus

The HCB Angus WrE (Water Tender Escape) was based at A2 Southmead. Like other WrE, the appliance carried a wheeled escape ladder which would usually extend to 50 feet. The appliance was replaced nationally by the water tender ladder.

Bedford Salvage Tender

The Bedford Salvage Tender was based at B4 Brislington and was used for decontamination and salvage. The appliance was originally based at Speedwell, but moved to Brislington in 1976. The yellow and black markings identified the vehicle as an appliance used for shouts involving chemicals. Salvage tenders carried a range of equipment to minimise the effects of water, smoke and fire damage and were also brought in to rescue goods from a fire.



Blast from the past



Former Divisional Officer Tom Hale has sent us this great photograph of our football team from the 1955 season.

Some of you may recognise the faces, but if your memory has become a little rusty over the years Tom's helped out by putting names to all the players. Pictured back row (left to right) is Tom Hale, Jack Allen, John Church, Monty Britton, Ron Norley and Ted Rudd. Front row (left to right) is Bill Lewis, Fred Leach, Fred Ponsford, Pete Hewitt and Ivor Taylor.

Many thanks to Tom for sending this photo in, we're always pleased to receive them.

IN THE NEWS

In **March** firefighters from Bath took part in sessions aimed at calming distressed animals at incidents.

Working with the British Horse Society, crews were given training in how to help calm large animals during rescues, reducing the risk of harm to the animal and ensuring the safety of members of public.

Older teenagers from B&NES were given a dramatic demonstration of a road traffic collision rescue in **April** when crews were invited to attend an education fair.

Throughout the B&NES Skills Fair, held at the City of Bath College, crews delivered four short 'RoadSkills' presentations looking at the issues affecting young road users, one of the groups most likely to be injured or killed on our roads.

Firefighters returned to Cabot Circus in Bristol later that month to raise funds for charity.



Above: Crews take part in sessions aimed at calming distressed animals at incidents.

Organised by Mike Collin from White Watch Speedwell, the eleven-strong team climbed a ladder more than 1,000 times to represent the 8,840 metre summit of Mount Everest.

Kingswood firefighters teamed up with local agencies and retailers in **May** to invite parents to the fire station to have their child car safety seats checked.

Around 80% were found to have faults, or been fitted incorrectly, during the event staged in partnership by AF&RS, South Gloucestershire Council's Road Safety Team, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Mothercare and Britax.

Also that month, the 1,000th tenant of North Somerset's largest landlord, NSHousing, received a Home Fire Safety Visit.



Left: Worle's Golden Lion backs our World Cup campaign.

'READ ALL ABOUT IT' AS WE LOOK BACK AT SOME OF OUR STORIES THAT HAVE MADE THE NEWS



Above: Teenagers from B&NES watch a dramatic demonstration of a road traffic collision rescue

The partnership has seen staff from Quadron, which carries out maintenance for the housing association, trained to deliver fire safety advice as part of their standard inspections.

The most at risk tenants are referred on to AF&RS for more

specific help and advice.

The service marked 20 years of line rescue in **June**, with firefighters demonstrating their skills at Bristol's Avon Gorge.

And, with all eyes on South Africa that month, AF&RS used

the World Cup bandwagon to promote cooking safety.

Local pubs lent their support to our campaign encouraging drinkers to opt for a takeaway rather than cook post match.



Left: 1,000th tenant receives a Home Fire Safety Visit.

Below: Family have their child car safety seats checked at Kingswood.



Spot the difference

Crews from Red Watch Bath took part in a road traffic collision demonstration in the city, but can you spot the 10 differences between these two pictures?



Dingbats



Can you identify the phrases from the clues?

1

#1 Looking

2

IN IN

3

SLAP LV

4

T E C
H I E

Brainteasers

See if you can work out these well known phrases from the letter and number clues below.

Just to get you started 3 BM would be 'Three Blind Mice'.

- 1) 7 H of R
- 2) 13 C in a S
- 3) 66 B of the B
- 4) 4 and 20 B B in a P
- 5) 6 W of H the E
- 6) 3 P for a D G in R
- 7) 5 T on a C (including S in the B)
- 8) 6 P on a S T
- 9) 7 Y of B L for B a M
- 10) 3 W from the G in the B



Can you find the penguin hiding inside this edition?

The first person to email magazine@avonfire.gov.uk with the correct location will win a prize!

Answers

Brainteasers: (1) Seven Hills of Rome, (2) 13 Cards in a Suit, (3) 66 Books of the Bible, (4) Four and 20 Blackbirds Baked in a Pie, (5) Six Wives of Henry the Eighth, (6) Three Points for a Drop Goal in Rugby, (7) Five Tyres on a Car (including Spare in Boot), (8) Six Pockets on a Snooker Table, (9) Seven Years of Bad Luck for Breaking a Mirror, (10) Three Wishes from the Genie in the Bottle.
Dingbats: (1) Looking after number one, (2) In black and white, (3) Slap and tickle, (4) Breaking the ice.



recycle

Please recycle this magazine when you have finished reading it.