



HAM IN THE SNOW

by Rylan Oliver



Scouter Ravi, one of our advisors (from the 5th Coquitlam Venturer company), got hooked on HAM, amateur radio, and “voluntold” us to get our licenses and do the same.

After we got our licenses we still did not really understand amateur radio and thought we would only use the VHF 2M radios for communication on trips and for the Emergency Services Team in Coquitlam.

At the Burnaby radio swap meet in February we purchased more equipment — two VHF portables (a “Realistic” and a “Standard”) as well as an Icom mobile.

Over the next few weeks we played around with the 2M, tried different repeaters, simplex, auto-patch, and IRLP nodes. It was pretty cool. We also went to the Coquitlam club, VE7 SCC, (where we are members) and got help from Ian Procyk and a few other members.

When we told Ian about “Rovent,” the winter camp (similar to a Jamboree) for Venturers, Rovers and senior branches of Guiding, he got excited about us using our new talents

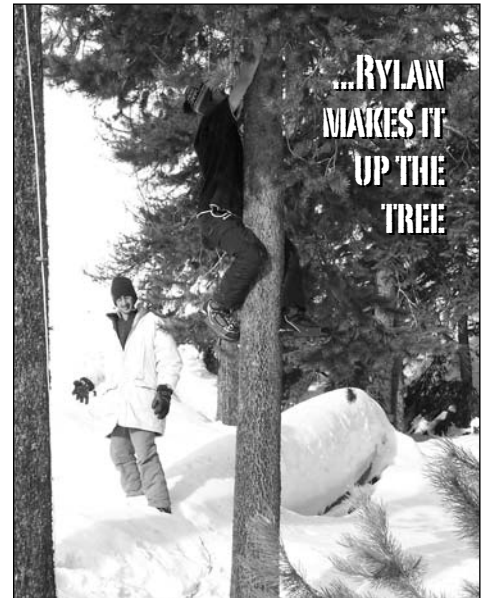
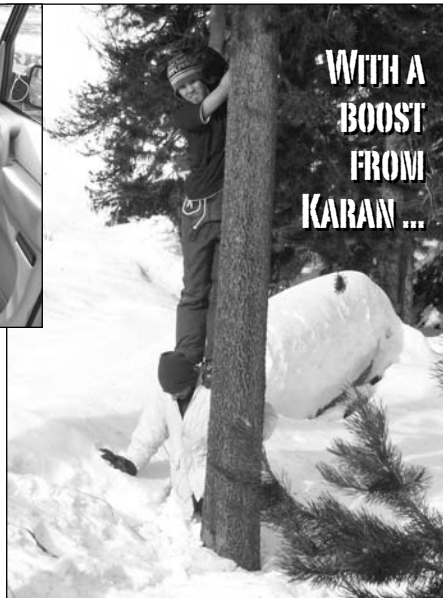
during the Rovent. Ian helped us construct an HF 80m dipole that we could use while at Rovent.

The Thursday before Rovent, the club loaned us an Icom 709 HF mobile to bring along for that weekend too.

Early Friday afternoon, as soon as we arrived at Rovent, we set up our shelter by digging out the snow, making space for our tents and the fire pit. At this time it was around -12 degrees C. Just before dark, our other advisor, Scouter Doug, arrived. With his help, we attempted to throw a line up into the trees for the HF antenna. After numerous tries, we only managed to get it 6.1 metres (20 feet) up the tree. We set up the antenna at that



▲ **KEEPING THE RECEIVER DRY IN THE VAN, THE VENTURERS SCAN FOR OTHER HAMS ON THE AIR.**



Photographs: Doug Oliver.

THE 49TH JOTA/10TH JOTI – A REMINDER

Two of Scouting's biggest international events, JOTA and JOTI, take place on the weekend of **October 21 and 22, 2006**. You can participate in either or both with your youth at very little cost. Go to the Scouts Canada web site at www.scouts.ca, click on "International" then "International Events Calendar", scroll down to JOTA/JOTI and download the booklet "JOTA: How Canadians Can Participate". The 48th International JOTA report is available from the same web page. For more information about the world wide reach of JOTA and JOTI, go to the international web sites at <http://home.hetnet.nl/~richard.middelkoop/> and www.joti.org.

As this is our 100th anniversary of Scouting, why not encourage Scouts to make contact with 100 other youth in Scouting during their JOTA/JOTI event? Before October arrives, make contact with an amateur radio operator and try to reach the following Scout Nets:

Country	Contact Day	Time	Frequency	Net Control
Denmark	Saturday	1300 GMT	3.740 MHZ	
European Scout Net	Saturday	0930 GMT	14.290 MHZ	PA3BAR
Japan	3 rd Sat. of Month	2300 local	21.360 MHZ	JA1YSS
Norway	Saturday	1530 local	3.740 MHZ	
Sudan	Sunday	1200 GMT	21.360 MHZ	ST2M
Sweden	Sat. even weeks	1500 local	3.740 MHZ	
United Kingdom	Saturday	0900 local	3.740 MHZ	G3BHK
United States	Sunday	2030 GMT	14.290 MHZ	K2BSA
World Scout Net	1 st Saturday of Month	2200 GMT	Echolink 131124	PA3BAR

Contact Lena Wong at (613)224-5131 if you do not have access to the internet and you want more information. We look forward to receiving a report and pictures of your group's activities during the 49th JOTA/10th JOTI. A summary of events will be published in *The Leader* in early spring.

height, hooked up the mobile and tried it out to see if we could get anything, but this was to no avail. As it was getting late, it was agreed that we would try again the next day.

After an extremely cold night (of -26 degrees!), we had breakfast and tried to throw the line higher up. We discovered that it's really difficult to throw a line higher than six metres. It was time to try another approach.

Putting the rope in my pocket, and with a boost from a friend, I managed to climb up the tree. Around 10.7 metres (35 feet) in the tree, I decided not to go any further as the branches were not strong enough to hold my weight. Throwing down the rope and tying it on, I pulled up the centre insulator of our HF dipole, and then climbed back down.

Next, we pulled out both elements to make an "Inverted V". Stretching the elements east-west, so our antenna did not interfere with the cross-country ski trail; oriented the antenna north-south. We reconnected the coax and scanned the band (80m). It worked! We could hear people from Utah and Iowa. We also talked to someone from Moser's Lake, Spokane, Washington.

Later on that night, when the ski trail wasn't in use anymore, we switched the elements to north-south, so the antenna was directional east-west (pointing down the valley). We listened to (and checked into) the BC net at 5:30. We could hear a station as far away as Thunder Bay, Ontario, and all the provinces in between. We also heard as far north as Prince George, BC.

Prior to checking into the net we called for a contact with the Island net and talked to some people from Vancouver Island, including Victoria and Port Alberni. Everyone that we talked to that night said we had a very good signal and asked what we were using! (Grin) Around 7:30 that night we shut down to go to the Rovent dance. The next morning, we dismantled it all and headed home.

The next week we went to a Baden-Powell recognition dinner with our group, 5th Coquitlam (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Venturers) and their families. Using the 2m VHF portables and our mobile, we held a demonstration on what HAM amateur radio really is. We showed them repeater use, simplex, and an auto-patch. We hope that this sparked an interest in a few of the Scouts, who will be moving up to Venturers next year.

As a group we are already planning on purchasing a few more portable 2m VHF's and a mobile HF unit. We are also

hoping to be active in CARESS (Coquitlam Amateur Radio Emergency Services Society). This would involve us helping to provide emergency communications during disaster exercises.

We owe Ian and the Coquitlam club our gratitude for all of their help. ✕

– Rylan Oliver, 5th Coquitlam Venturers

Linking to Strategic Directions #3 and #4.

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