

Resourceful Rescues

Enter ART Magazine's/Oceanid's "Resourceful Water Rescue Competition"

By Rick Hood

When Kris Walker of Oceanid suggested a competition to recognize and reward teams conducting water rescues, the staff of ART Magazine asked: "What exactly did you have in mind?"

Walker, who designs and produces RDC rescue crafts and other larger boats, suggested Oceanid and ART Magazine work together to get the word out about resourceful water rescues, so other rescuers can see what works.

From the beginning, both entities recognized that the most prestigious award for overall outstanding achievement in swiftwater rescue is the Higgins and Langley Memorial Award, given out at NASAR each spring (for

entry details see page 13). Walker's idea is substantially different—he wants to recognize a "resourceful" rescue conducted by a team. The number of individuals rescued, or the size and scope of the entire rescue effort, which often is the hallmark of the Higgins/Langley, is not his proposed focus. Rather, Walker wants the competition to focus on technologies and tactics that a team might employ to effect a safe rescue, when quite possibly the team's initial approach didn't work in a particular rescue effort, and, within the limits of their safety and training, the team needed to be resourceful and modify its approach to accomplish the rescue.

In support of this, Kris Walker will donate a new RDC rescue craft, with a

retail price of \$3,000, for the most resourceful team rescue. The winning team and two runners-up will also receive an engraved plaque. The boat will be awarded at EMS EXPO 2004, hosted by *Advanced Rescue Technology* and *EMS Magazines*, October 19–23 in Atlanta, GA. ART Magazine will provide a three-day conference registration and travel allowance for a representative from the winning team to attend the show. The three winners will also be profiled in an upcoming issue of *Advanced Rescue Technology*.

For those with a resourceful water rescue effort to recount, you are encouraged to enter. Just complete the application form found on the next page and return to ART Magazine by July 15, 2004.

5 Minutes With Kris Walker

Rick Hood: The water rescue competition you are co-sponsoring with ART Magazine has "resourceful" as its focus. What do you mean by resourcefulness, and why have you made it the central tenet for this award?

Kris Walker: Resourceful in this context includes several elements. Successful professional rescues require a thorough understanding of the three primary elements of water emergency rescues: training, equipment and environment (TEE). Although it is impossible to eliminate luck from the equation, the more a team is versed with TEE, the less likely that the outcome will be affected by luck, good or bad. "Synergizing TEE," i.e., the whole being greater than the sum of its parts, is how I would define resourceful.

RH: Do teams need to push the safety envelope to be resourceful?

KW: No. It is not realistic to assume that a team can adequately train for every conceivable water rescue situation, but once they have professionally mastered TEE, imagination and confidence can lead to a scenario where a bad situation can be turned into a remarkable rescue without putting the team at any greater than normal risk.

RH: So "safe" and "resourceful" are not at odds, but are complementary?

KW: Resourcefulness can only be achieved with a thorough understanding of the potentials and the limits associated with TEE. The more you understand the limits, the more you can reduce the associated risk for both the rescuer and the victim.

RH: Why the team focus?

KW: Only through team effort can you achieve professional results. No matter how few are in the "hands on" part of the rescue, it is the prior and continuing team effort that makes a professional rescue response possible. It is better to be a player who makes a team great than it is to be a great player.

RH: In terms of the competition, do numbers count? Is a rescue of 10 individuals more resourceful than the rescue of a single person?

KW: No. Size or number of subjects rescued will not be a major factor for determining the award; resourcefulness comes in all sizes.

RH: Can you give me an example of what you term as a resourceful rescue?

KW: One outstanding example of a resourceful response was performed by the Ottawa Fire Department when they rescued a teenager 60' below ground level in the municipal sewer system. The rescue involved high-angle techniques, as they had to lower their boat and the two responders 20 meters down through a manhole; confined-space techniques, as they were in a 6'-wide pitch-black tunnel navigating by headlamps; swiftwater techniques, as they had to maneuver more than a half mile; hazardous chemical and biological environment techniques, as they were required to monitor the atmosphere and operate in raw effluent; and creative communications techniques, as their radios could not perform adequately in the underground environment. This was a most remarkable rescue.

RH: Does the rescue have to be complicated or complex to be considered resourceful?

KW: No. Essentially you are looking at a rescue scenario where your first approach might not work, so you extend or expand your approach, but within the limitations of TEE. In essence, you might say resourcefulness is moving beyond temporary setbacks.

RH: Why are you co-sponsoring this competition?

KW: I hope this increases communication among teams conducting water rescue. If teams hear about a resourceful rescue that they might not otherwise have heard about, we as a rescue community become better and stronger for it. Sharing knowledge is the primary purpose of this endeavor.

—RH

Advanced Rescue Technology and Oceanid are pleased to announce a new recognition program for a **“Resourceful Water Rescue”**

This competition is open to any professional paid or non-paid team in North America that has conducted a water rescue from January 1, 2003–June 1, 2004. Applications must be received by July 15, 2004. Judging will be based on the following criteria: Safe and resourceful rescue in moving or still water, fresh or salt, fluid or frozen water, or any combination of these, for one or more victims, by a rescue team. This award is intended to recognize a specific and single rescue effort of a team and not a cumulative effort throughout the year, or even an extended mission. The top three efforts will be recognized in the pages of *ART Magazine*. Each team will receive a plaque donated by Oceanid and the Grand Winner will receive a new RDC, valued at \$3000, to be presented at EMS EXPO 2004, October 19–23 in Atlanta, GA. *ART Magazine* will provide a three-day conference registration and travel allowance for a representative from the winning team to attend the show. A rescue knife will also be awarded to the three individuals who send in the winning entries. To nominate a team, fill out the form below and return to *ART Magazine* by July 15, 2004. Those needing more space may use additional paper.



Rick Hood

Team Name	Location and date of rescue
Brief summary of rescue	
Why do you regard this as a resourceful water rescue?	
Who on your team was involved?	
What was the outcome and what, if any, were the lessons learned?	
Who can we contact for additional information/confirmation and how?	
Name and contact telephone number of the person completing this form if different from above:	
<p>Note: Up to three photos, a mission report and a newspaper account may be submitted as well, in support of your nomination. Any of these are likely to strengthen your application. We regret we cannot return these items.</p>	<p>Send application to: Water Rescue Competition, c/o ART Magazine, 7626 Densmore Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91406, or fax to 818/786-9246. Questions? Call 800/224-4367.</p>