

June 2, 1999

Bud Calkin
SKEDCO, Inc.
P.O. Box 230487
Portland, Or. 97281

Re : The 1300 pound man rescue

Dear Bud :

Knowing your interest in some of the more "unusual" uses of the SKED litter, I thought this one would be appreciated. Here are the details :

Huntsville Emergency Medical Services, Inc. (HEMSI) , our local EMS agency has had to transport a rather "large" individual over the last few years or so (19 times in the last 2 years !) to be seen at one of the local hospital for various reasons. This 40 year old man at the time weighed in the 700 to 800 pound range, and was always transported in a unit with the regular cot and fittings removed and a SKED used to move him with LOTS of manpower. Fortunately he lived on the ground floor of a small frame house here in Huntsville, Alabama.

On May 10th, at about 6:30 PM I received a call to respond with a SKED litter to his residence in NE Huntsville to assist in moving the subject who had requested an ambulance to take him to the Hospital with back and chest pains. At the scene were units from HEMSI, members of the Huntsville-Madison County Rescue Squad, a crew from the Huntsville Fire-Rescue Department, and various onlookers. I was informed that the patient had gotten somewhat "larger" since last time, and that things were going to be a little worse than usual. A smoke ejector (Fan) was set up to provide ventilation in the small 10' x 10' room the subject was in. He was lying in (and over, and around) a twin size bed, and was larger than all ! He was conscious but was unable to move or assist us much. We were able to work the SKED under him, but (as Expected) the straps were WAY too short. Besides, he was larger than the SKED laid out flat. We used 2 10' long "OMNI-SLINGS" and carabiners to strap him on the SKED. Then using about 15 rescuers - started with 8 and couldn't move him- were able to move him out onto the porch. Fortunately the door was an old style (read "larger than normal") door which enabled us to basically do a "slide/pass through the doorway, with people on both sides. We were then able to put him in the back of the ambulance, where he filled up the space to a depth of about 2 ½' high !! Whew!

He was then transported to the hospital for evaluation, with the procedure being reversed to get him into the ER. After an evaluation, and finding out that his actual weight was over 1300 pounds (1347 plus or minus), he was released by the hospital that evening, and returned to his residence later that night. Unfortunately he arrested during the return and did not survive.

The SKED used in this evac has previously been used in .cave rescues, cliff rescues, and various training classes. It suffered minor stretching of some of the lifting holes, and a small puncture from a possible projection on the floor at one point about ¼" in diameter. No big deal. It was an impressive sight - 15 people on one SKED in a 10x10 room.....

Thanks again for making such a good product for those of us at the " sharp end of the stick ".

Best Regards,



Ed Nicholas, EMT-D
Operations Officer
HEMSI High Angle-Rough Terrain (HART) Team
Huntsville, Alabama