



Bitter Cold Left Its Mark

Ralph Coltrin, 12, shows Louis Burgess, 16, and Ronny Sepulveda, 11, standing, the story in yesterday morning's Arizona Daily Star describing the rescue attempts being made to find three Boy Scouts lost in Madera Canyon. The six boys were companions on a hike but Ralph, Louis and Ronny turned back before they reached the top of Mt. Baldy. (Jack Sheaffer photo by Harry Lewis)

Young Survivors Tell Of Ill-Fated Journey

Scouts Relate How Party Split Up

Three Tucson Scouts are alive today because two of them became tired and the third joined them in withdrawing to a base camp after attempting to hike up to Mt. Baldy in the Santa Rita Mountains Saturday.

The fate of three other Scouts—the boys' companions—is in doubt this morning as hundreds of rescuers prepare to resume a painstaking search of the snow-clogged mountains.

The three, who were returned to their homes yesterday, appeared in good health; in fact one of the boys was well enough to deliver his paper route in the afternoon.

Louis Burgess, 15, and Ronny Sepulveda talked freely last night about their experiences. Ralph Coltrin Jr., 12, delivered his papers and then discussed his adventure.

Ralph, whose father is assistant superintendent of the Southern Pa-

cific in Tucson, said they started hiking up the side of Mt. Baldy about 10 a.m. Saturday after being dropped at the end of the Madera Canyon Rd. by John Early, father of one of the boys.

They climbed steadily until mid-afternoon when Ronny became exhausted and unnerved by the high altitude. He sat down by the side of the trail to wait for the others' return.

"We hiked for about 20 minutes and Ralph pooped out," Louis said. "We left him behind and climbed for about 20 more minutes. Then we saw the top of Baldy ahead and I said I was turning back."

The others, Mike Early, 16, David Greenberg, 12 and Michael La Noue, 13, elected to continue to go on because they were so near their goal.

"Mike wanted to go to the top cause he's been there before and Greenberg wanted to go too," Ralph said. "I asked Mike La Noue to go down with us but he said no."

La Noue was dressed the warmest of the missing trio. He was wearing three or four sweaters and a jacket, Ralph said. The others just wore jackets. Both La Noue and Early carried waterproof matches and were believed to have some K ration malt tablets, Louis said.

Louis met Ralph and Ronny on the way back and the three reached their camp at the end of the road just before nightfall.

The three quickly erected their tents and crawled into their sleeping bags. They had cached their equipment under picnic tables that morning.

It started raining at dusk and at midnight the rain turned to snow. During the night Ronny got up and lost his shoes in the darkness.

The snow buried them and the boys were unable to find them in the morning. Ronny is a Tenderfoot scout; the others are Second Class scouts.

Early, who had made arrangements to pick up the boys Sunday morning, met Louis on the trail as the boy trudged for help. The two returned and escorted Ralph and Ronny to the Santa Rita Lodge, a mile and a half down the road.

Ronny—in bare feet—ran ahead and got to the lodge first. He was in tears and hysterical from the cold. His feet were slightly frost-bitten.

The others arrived soon after.

Behind them they left silence and three boys.