

Don Dubin

Personally I am proud to be part of the team that makes up CCSAR-S, and I take being a team member seriously. I believe we all have the obligation to our fellow team members to be properly equipped and prepared for the missions at hand. It is our obligation to be open and honest about what we are capable of doing and what we are not. We are a team whose safety depends on each other.

The following is just my own personal list and how I approach winter missions.

### **Items I always have with me during full winter ops**

#### **Remember staying dry is priority number one**

Proper layers to begin with including hat, gloves, liners, neck gaiter, goggles and sunglasses

Base Layer (thickness depends on how cold I determine it might be, this must be a synthetic fabric that is great at wicking moisture away)

Mid Layer (probably 2 mid layers for warmth one pile or merino wool, one down vest or parka)

Outer layer (Gore tex, water resistant and hood)

Hat, gloves, baklava, liners

Radio (probably not using a chest harness and using pack pocket for radio and clip mike to the pack) this is personal preference, enough gear and clothes etc. Better able to work my layers properly, would take some items from chest harness and out into pack. (See Below)

\*GPS (Clipped on pack)

Map of area (map pocket of pack)

Compass (map pocket of pack)

Bandana

2 Kleenex packs, lip balm, hand wash towelettes (pocket of pack)

Water (probably 1 litre in insulated hydration bladder and tube and 1 litre in normal bottle in pack) be careful with camelbacks they tend to freeze

Food that is OK if frozen (bars that are OK if frozen, gorp, nuts etc) (pocket of pack)

Survival tarp (Near top of pack so I can spread out and put stuff sacks on it)

Whistle (clipped on pack)

Shovel (outside pocket of pack)

Probe (outside pocket of pack)

Beacon (strapped on me under outer layer)

Kahtoola micro spikes (in own stuff sack)

Orange marking tape (top pocket in pack)

2 garbage bags ( top pocket in pack) With 2 garbage bags and 2 rubber bands I can use on feet

Gaiters (Top Pocket of pack)

Headlight (top pocket of pack)

SAR Hat

### **Orange emergency stuff sack**

First aid kit

\*Extra batteries (headlight and GPS)

Signal mirror

Wire saw

Extra headlight

Rubber bands

Extra bars and energy food

Lighters, matches, and fire starter

Multi tool (small very light)

Para cord

One-inch tubular sling

2 prusiks

2 carabiners

**Best two items you can have in a repair kit** (still in orange sack)

Zip ties

Small roll duct tape

**Blue stuff sack (large, waterproof)**

Down Booties or fleece booties

Extra socks

Mid layer shirt

Extra hat

Extra gloves

Long underwear

**Items I always carry in the car and make a judgment call whether to bring** (all fits in a plastic bin)

Mission details and specifics will dictate what to bring. Lost or injured party, terrain, area where we are headed, time of day, weather etc.

Radio chest harness (extra headlight, multi tool, whistle, orange tape, carabiner and white med tape, pad pencil, sheriff's card and lit ticket))

Lots of extra gloves, goggles, hats, liners, clothes in general

Half sleeping bag (goes in blue stuff sack)

Bivy Sac (goes in blue stuff sack)

Climbing harness, ropes, carabiners, rescue pulleys, etc (goes in orange stuff sack)

Small thermarest pad

Helmet's

Small stove, tea bags, small pot, cup (own stuff sack)

Winter snowshoe boots

Snowshoes and poles

Katadyn backpack water filter

A/T skis, poles, skins and boots (These I keep close at hand at home and can grab quickly if called out)

\* Be careful one challenge I have found in the winter if everything stays in your car, batteries can get zapped by the cold.

**My personal outline and thoughts for backcountry winter ops**

**Staying dry** is always priority number one

Making sure if I am too hot going uphill I remove some layers and stay as dry as I can. When I stop get layers back on before I get cold.

If you wait until you are cold and then try to warm up it is much harder to do. Managing layers is an important part of winter operations.

I have personally witnessed minor missions and minor incidents turn into frostbitten extremities because they got wet when someone was careless.

Movements are thought out with an extra degree of caution.

Routes and making sure of where we are is extremely important in winter, wrong turns especially down hill are not always so easy to correct

I would be paying extra close attention to the weather and movements of clouds. A fast moving blizzard is a way different scenario than a summer thunderstorm.

Making sure everyone on the team is OK, warm, and able to handle the circumstances

If it were getting late and there was any possibility of having to bivvy for the night I would be making note of good spots to do that, as well as good spots for a snow cave, paying attention to the wind direction and weather.

Shovel and probe are easily accessible for quick deployment without having to take anything else out of my pack

ALL items in my pack are divided into stuff sacks so nothing is loose.

Extra socks, base layer, and liners in case something gets wet

Down booties, if I am in AT boots and have to dig in and spend some time they are invaluable

If I really do need to bivouac for a night, if I have my half bag, tarp and pad, and with the use my pack, I will have a pretty good chance of surviving the night without too much discomfort. But this adds a lot of weight so always a carefully weighed decision.

If I can't really get myself off the snow with the above items then it might be best to keep dancing and singing all night.

