

First-Aid And Mine Rescue Contest Scheduled Sept. 6-7 In Louisville

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton Saturday announced that the National First-Aid and Mine Rescue Contest — famed as the “World Series of Safety” — will be held here Sept. 6 and 7.

The two-day event is sponsored by the Bureau of Mines and its new Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration in cooperation with state inspection agencies, mine management and labor organizations, and other groups.

The September contest will be the 24th in a series that started in 1911, and which (with few

interruptions) has been held at two-year intervals.

This will be the fifth time in 16 years that the competition has been held at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center here. The 23rd contest was held there two years ago, the 22nd in 1967, the 21st in 1965, and the 17th in 1957.

Complete instructions and entry blanks for the National First-Aid and Mine Rescue Contest can be obtained from the Contest Secretary, Bureau of Mines, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or from Bureau Health and Safety field offices across the country.



Miners at fairgrounds are competing in contest stressing first aid, safety

By DAN KAUFFMAN
Courier-Journal Staff Writer

Donald Disney and his fellow miners from the International Harvester Co. at Benham, Ky., started into the mine yesterday not more than a couple of minutes after they got the word there was a fire inside and five men were trapped.

Fortunately, the trapped miners weren't real. And neither was the mine; it was just pipes laid out at the Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center to represent underground rooms.

The miners were competing in the 24th biennial National First-Aid and Mine Rescue Contest sponsored by the new Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration. Under Department of Interior jurisdiction, the enforcement division is a part of the Bureau of Mines.

Ronald Boggs, a member of the International Harvester team, said they've been practicing for the event "two hours

a day, three days a week" for the last three months.

Before they entered the fake mine they donned their self-contained breathing apparatus, checked their stretcher, latched themselves onto the line they would drag into the mine and went in to look for the victims.

As they went they carefully checked their meters for signs of explosive gas. Disney was out front beating the imaginary roof and listening for the telltale "drummy" sound that indicates danger of a roof collapse.

The five team members came to their first body and one of them gave one tug on the rope to tell the man outside they were stopping.

Later they came to a conscious victim. They bound his hands in front of him, in case he panicked, gave three tugs on the rope and led the man out.

Then they went back in the mine, where they found two more bodies and

finally an unconscious man, whom they carried out.

They had solved their two-hour problem in about 74 minutes.

The winners of the contest will be announced at a banquet tonight. A first-aid competition and a one-hour rescue problem will also take place today. Forty-eight teams participated in yesterday's 11-hour competition.

Observing the contest were two new United Mine Workers safety officials, Charles Parrish and John Sulka. Both are former employees of the Bureau of Mines.

Sulka, who will be the executive safety director, said he intends to make the safety "training and education of the miner" the most important part of his safety program.

Sulka said, "Once we get the miners trained, foremen won't be able to ask them to violate the law."

Parrish is the new chief mine inspector for the UMW.



Staff Photo by Bud Kamenish

TWO MINERS on the Republic Steel Corp. team from Newfield Mine in Uniontown, Pa., check a map during the safety competition.

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He cites federal safety act

Morton notes decline in coal mine deaths

By MERVIN AUBESPIN

Courier-Journal Staff Writer

Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton said last night that although the number of lives lost in coal mines has decreased in the last three years, the introduction of a more accurate accident reporting system indicates an alarming number of disabling injuries.

Morton stressed that point while addressing an audience at the 24th National Mine Rescue and First-Aid Awards Banquet at the Executive Inn in Louisville.

More than 700 persons, representing mines from across the nation, heard Morton say that as a result of the passage of the 1969 Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act mining conditions have greatly improved.

Morton said that last year 156 men lost their lives mining coal, compared with

311 in 1968. "A reduction of 50 per cent in four years."

"At the end of the first seven months of this year, there was a 33 per cent reduction in fatalities from that of 1972," he said.

"A 33 per cent improvement . . . on top of two record-setting years in reducing coal mine fatalities suggests that we may be doing something right," he said.

Noting that a new accident reporting system has been introduced to the mining industry and that the increase of injuries reported may be due to this system, Morton said that there will be more than 10,000 disabling injuries this year.

He said that because of this a new accident-reduction program has been put into effect that will attempt to reduce the number of disabling injuries by monitoring coal mines that have disabling injury

frequency rates higher than the national average.

West Virginia teams claimed three of five first-place honors yesterday at the close of the two-day National First-Aid and Mine Rescue Contest.

Mountaineer Coal Co.'s Williams Mine at Worthington, W. Va., won first in the first-aid contest; Union Carbide's Blue Creek Mine No. 2 of Clendenin, W. Va., was first in the two-hour coal mine rescue event and in the one-hour mine rescue event.

Peabody Coal Co.'s Camp No. 2 mine at Morganfield, Ky., won the combination mine rescue and first-aid event, and Morton's Salt Co.'s Kleer Mine at Grand Saline, Tex., won the two-hour non-coal mine rescue event.

Other results:

Combination mine rescue and first aid:

Westmoreland Coal Co., Quinwood No. 2, Quinwood, W. Va., second; Allied Chemical Corp., Shannon Branch Mine, Capels, W. Va., third.

First aid: Consolidation Coal Co., West Farm No. 22, Cadiz, Ohio, second; Westmoreland's Quinwood No. 7, Leivasy, W. Va., third.

Coal Mine Rescue: International Harvester, Benham, Ky., second; U.S. Steel, Gary, W. Va., third.

Noncoal Mine Rescue: Cominco American Inc., Magmount Mine, Bixby, Mo., second; Ozark Lead Co., Sweetwater, Mo., third.

One-hour Mine Rescue: Westmoreland, Hampton Division, Clothier, W. Va., second; National Mine Corp., Wayland, Ky., third.

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Rescue-First-Aid

48 Teams Compete In Mining Contests

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Forty-eight mine rescue teams from across the country began participation in the 24th National First-Aid and Mine Rescue Contest Thursday—with the help of smoke bombs, simulated mines, methane gas, carbon monoxide or lack of oxygen.

The contest, begun in 1911 and held every two years, is sponsored by the Interior Department's Bureau of Mines.

One observer, who was a member of a rescue team at Hyden, Ky. in late 1970 after an explosion that killed 38 men, called the contest "good practice."

"But you can't begin to know

what it's really like until you've worked on a real disaster," he said.

The contest is an opportunity for the rescue teams to iron out faults, one of the men pointed out. One of the teams "rescued" a mining disaster victim only to drop him on his head when they approached the judge's stand.

A member of the International Harvester team from Benham, Ky., Ronald Boggs, said his team has been practicing for the event "two hours a day, three days a week" for the last three months.

The winners of the contest were to be announced Friday night.

National Events

West Virginia Teams Capture Mining Contests

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The contest was sponsored by the Bureau of Mines in the Interior Department.

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State Is Internationally Known For Mine First-Aid, Rescue Teams

FRANKFORT — Among traditions for which Kentucky is internationally noted is one to which many miners owe their lives.

For almost 20 years, the state has produced many of the top

mine rescue and first aid teams in the nation.

"Since Kentucky teams were summoned to the salt mine disaster in Louisiana about 10 years ago," said H.N. Kirkpatrick, commissioner of the

Kentucky Department of Mines and Minerals, "the state's teams have often been called to help when disaster strikes in other states or even other countries."

HE RECALLED when a large mine explosion occurred in Mexico in 1969, the Mexican government requested help from Kentucky's mine rescue teams. However, when Kirkpatrick arrived at the mine, the 178 miners had already died and the 10 Kentucky crews on standby were never sent.

Kirkpatrick cites the consistent championship of one of the state's volunteer rescue and first aid teams as the prime example of them all. "The Wisconsin Steel mine rescue group at Benham won the national mine rescue championship throughout the 1960's," said Kirkpatrick.

"In 1971, the old team broke up and a new one was formed. At its first contest, the team finished fifth and this year, with three years experience, they finished second in the nation."

THE FIRST AID team from the Pittsburg & Midway, Drake No. 3 mine placed fifth in the national ranking of the federal Bureau of Mines.

"Kentucky's winning teams and the other 33 that were good enough to compete nationally are results of the effort and pride the miners put into these crews," continued Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick believes the winning tradition is the result of pride and frequent contests which spur that pride. "Most other states pay their mine rescue and first aid teams but

we don't have to," he said.

"We hold five regional contests plus a state contest every other year when the national contest isn't held. In fact, the past two national contests have been held in Louisville because so many Kentucky people come," he added.

During the contests, the seven or eight men in each crew are put through their paces in mock mines with mock patients. The mine rescue teams don breathing apparatus and work their way through simulated fire, smoke, water and falling roofs.

Outside the mine, the first aid teams demonstrate their skills in treating injured miners.

KIRKPATRICK SAID the interest in the rescue and first aid contests is amazing and as intense in some areas as the interest in football and basketball in other areas. "The miners practice and practice for these contests. Then the families and friends of the miners turn out for the contests to spur them on."

The big companies are usually very anxious to produce winning teams, Kirkpatrick added. These companies usually hire full time safety instructors to teach and train the mines and minerals department also has instructors who assist the miners in safety and rescue procedures.

"The pride and outstanding skill these teams show is a wonderful thing to see," said Kirkpatrick. "It's a tradition I hope and believe will continue as long as we mine coal. It's a tradition which brings pride to the whole state."

Reclamation Work

Strict Laws To Continue

FRANKFORT — Strict enforcement of reclamation laws will continue in Kentucky even if production of surface-mined coal is increased to help relieve the present national fuel crisis, Thomas Harris, commissioner for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, said Friday.

"We plan to continue enforcing reclamation statutes and regulations as we have done during the past 16 months that I have held this office," he said. "The substantial strides we've made in developing new mining and reclamation technologies will not be abandoned but will be continued at their present level. We will continue to require proper environmental safeguards before processing permits."

THE DEPARTMENT for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Harris said, will also not abandon work on unreclaimed strip mine lands which were in default of bond when he assumed office. "Our progress in reclaiming

as an alternative fuel source to relieve energy shortages, Harris said, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Department will be capable of processing permit applications and inspecting surface disturbances covering approximately 30,000 acres as compared to only 26,000 acres in the last year.

However, Harris cautioned that numerous factors could hinder the ability of the coal industry in Kentucky to expand its production. Among these, he said, are serious shortages of ammonium nitrate used for blasting, diesel fuel for heavy earth moving equipment, rail cars for transporting coal, equipment parts, fertilizer and seed necessary to keep revegetation up to date and delays in equipment deliveries.

"Coal operators have told me they feel they can increase surface mining production by 15 per cent during the next year, provided all requirements are available," Harris noted.