Thai soccer team recovering after heroic cave rescue

Posted by Alan Van Wormer On 07/14/2018

THAILAND - Twelve teens and their soccer coach are safe and recovering in a hospital after being trapped in a cave in northern Thailand for 17 days.

All eyes were on the rural town of Mae Sai, Thailand when news broke that a boys youth soccer team, "The Wild Boars" went missing while exploring the Tham Luang cave, June 23. According to the BBC, the team went exploring the cave as an initiative but they were caught off guard by a flash flood that forced them deeper into the cave before being cut off to the exit completely.

Around the world, reports of the team trapped in the cave were met in force. Military rescue specialists and cave divers were called in from the U.S., UK, Australia and several other countries to assist Thai rescue teams.

Eight days into the search and rescue operation John Volanthen and Rick Stanton, two British divers discovered the air pocket where the team was located (video above), nearly two miles from the cave entrance. From there, the boys were provided medical attention, substantial food and water, and wrote letters to loved ones while rescue crews developed a plan.

With more rain on the way, the cave was expected to be completely flooded within days. On Sunday, July 7, it was announced that rescuers would began to pull the boys out of the cave. The boys were given a full-faced air mask and sedated to ensure they didn't panic as Thai Navy Seals used a sling and pulley system to carefully guide them through the narrow, flooded cave. By Tuesday, July 10, the mission was a success, divers emerged from Tham Luang with the last boy. The Guardian reports that equipment malfunctions caused the cave to re-flood just three hours after the final rescue.

After the miraculous rescue, all boys and their coach are reported to be in good condition and expected to be released within the week.

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