

Fall in Mine Shaft Hurts Cycle Rider

By Ron Grenko

MIAMI, Okla. — A Claremore motorcyclist was critically injured Sunday when he and his bike plunged 80 feet into a crater created by an abandoned mine shaft near here.

Unconscious and listed in critical condition at Tulsa's Hillcrest Hospital was Sammy Dowling, 23, who plunged into the opening as he topped a chat pile about 200 feet high.

Dowling and a group of friends had come from Claremore to ride their motorcycles over the towering piles of mine tailings that dot the countryside near Miami.

John Mills, deputy Civil Defense director from Miami, and Paul McGowan of nearby Picher were lowered by rope to rescue him.

They placed him in a wire stretcher that was hoisted to the surface by spectators and officers who gathered at the scene.

"He was semi-conscious when I first got down to him," Mills said. "I checked him for obvious injuries. He seemed to respond when I told him not to move but he never was really conscious."

"He didn't have any obvious injuries, but I didn't check too close, just to make sure he didn't have a broken back."

Mills said the chat pile Dowling rode on had caved-in on top, just like a crater. The crater apparently was formed when a mine tunnel beneath the pile collapsed.

"From what they tell me, it has been there quite
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1972 Cycle rider rescued after fall into shaft



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