



Members of FDNY Marine 1 unit, which rescued pregnant Latisha Rawling: (l.-r.) Firefighter Michael Lambert, Lt. Michael Finer and Firefighter Tim Moynihan. Photo by Michael Schwartz

Saved seconds from drowning

Bravest get to pregnant mom just in time

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A TEAM of firefighters, its rescue boat bouncing on the Hudson River's choppy waters, struggled to see through the night's darkness to find a pregnant woman they feared was drowning.

But moments before the firefighters were about to abandon hope, they spotted her arm suddenly breaking through the water's surface just before 11 p.m. Tuesday.

"We were about to give up and start the search over," said Firefighter Michael Lambert, part of the FDNY's elite Marine 1 unit. "We noticed she was pregnant and unresponsive. . . . She was in bad shape."

More than 100 yards from shore, the

FDNY boat circled the woman as the firefighters trained a high-powered flashlight on where they had spied her arm.

"It's like finding a needle in a haystack," said Lt. Michael Finer, who spotted the woman's desperate reach for the sky. "I think it was the last time she was going down."

Though Firefighter Tim Moynihan wasn't yet tethered to the boat, he realized the woman did not have time to spare — and plunged headfirst into the water.

"I went into the water and lost sight of her," Moynihan said yesterday. "I reached in and grabbed her hair and spun her around."

The woman — identified by sources as Latisha Rawling of Queens — was listed in stable condition yesterday at St. Vincent's Hospital Manhattan, and her unborn child also was expected to survive, officials said. It was not clear why she jumped in the water, sources said.

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