about 25 feet high and slightly overhanging. Some of the candidates for leader status were taking turns leading up the pitch which was 5th class and required several pitons in the rather rotten rock. The first person made the climb successfully. As the second man was leading it there were four persons below him, the belayer and three 'kibitzers.' Karl Hufbauer (20) was one of the 'kibitzers' and as a leader was also observing the technique. Near the top of the pitch the climber had a rather large handhold crumble out and he peeled off. His first piton came out but the second held and his fall was only about 12 feet. Meanwhile a shower of rocks rained on the spectators. Hufbauer was the only one hit by a large rock and was knocked unconscious, not even feeling it hit. Apparently he regained consciousness within a minute or so but his memory retention was poor. Hobey DeStaebler, leader of the trip, arrived about 5 minutes later with a first aid kit. After testing his reactions and bandaging the wound the decision was made to walk him to the cars about ½ mile away. This course was chosen as the fastest since he was losing blood and time might be a factor. (Doctors later said the decision was probably right; it was apparently a 50-50 question). Hufbauer was taken to a hospital where emergency surgery was performed for a fractured skull. He remained in the hospital for a week. DeStaebler is to be complimented for a well executed rescue with a minimum of fuss (practice climb continued with many persons not realizing the accident had occurred) and a maximum of speed.

Source: Karl Hufbauer.

Analysis: Practice climbs are not as safe as normally assumed and precautions which are taken on longer, more difficult climbs should be adhered to. Since Hufbauer's accident he has checked with many people and nearly all of them said that their own clubs made the tacit assumption that all loose rocks on practice climbs had long since been pulled out. This assumption certainly is not warranted, as this case demonstrates.

California, Matterhorn Peak—On June 15, while descending a broad snow chute on Matterhorn Peak, George Wallerstein (28) tripped and fell. As he attempted a self-arrest with his ice ax somehow he was impaled on the point, which went completely through his leg. Fortunately no major vessels were injured. First aid was given and he was able to ski and hike out by himself. There were 37 on the trip. His wound healed without incident and he climbed North Palisade 20 days later.

Source: Mugelnoos No. 307, July 10, 1958: George Wallerstein.

Analysis: As Wallerstein pointed out in his letter, more organized practice in ice ax technique is advisable. He further suggested that groups who have had limited experience with the ax use two or more week-ends in the early spring for practice. This should include practice of the techniques on hard frozen snow as well as on the softer snow of the afternoon.

California, Kings Canyon National Park, Paradise Valley—On August 21, Charles Gibbons (16) of Hollywood, California, climbing in hazardous terrain with two companions, became stranded on a ledge approximately 1,000 feet above the floor of Paradise Valley on the South fork of the