

in a general state of confusion, unable to help himself. Michael Faber traveled to the Longs Peak Ranger station and notified dispatch of the situation by phone, at 11 a.m. During this time span, the skier joined them at the scene and they all assisted in helping Weiswell. Based on the information received, Ranger Seibert was dispatched to the scene on foot. St. Anthony's helicopter was requested and Rangers Casebeer and Van Slyke and Dan Gossett (emergency labor) followed Seibert with evacuation gear. Helicopter evacuation was completed by 4 p.m. It was learned from the hospital in Denver the next morning that Weiswell had acute bronchial pneumonia and pulmonary edema.

It should be noted that Weiswell had not checked with Park personnel prior to his departure from the Longs Peak Ranger Station as required by federal regulation. No one knew that Weiswell was on the mountain. It is only through the efforts of Doug Snivley, John Tuckey, Michael Pitts, Michael Falen, Tom Tracy and Ron Wallace that Weiswell made it off the mountain alive, as the attending medical personnel indicated Weiswell had only about one hour to live due to the fluid accumulation in his lungs. (Source: Larry Van Slyke, Rocky Mountain National Park)

(Ed. Note: While not a mountaineering accident per se, this accident is reported to demonstrate again that pulmonary edema occurs at lower elevations, that being alone in the mountains can add complications if one becomes ill or injured, and that inexperienced hikers are subject to the same hazards as mountaineers.)

RAPPEL FAILURE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

Colorado, Twin Owls

On June 30, at 2:45 p.m., Diane Russell (23) fell vertically 25 to 30 feet down a rock face while lowering herself down a rope. She sustained a compression fracture of a vertebra, bruised right foot and a sprained right hand as a result of the fall. Park personnel responded and evacuated Russell on a spine board to the Twin Owls trailhead where she was taken to the Estes Park hospital by ambulance.

According to Russell and Mike Babowicz (her climbing companion) Russell had reached the top of the first lead on the Wolfstooth route on Twin Owls. Finding that Babowicz could not follow the route, he untied from his end of the rope and Russell began to lower herself using a top anchor as a pulley and holding onto the rope as it passed up through the anchor and down to her. As she lowered herself, the end of the rope going up through the anchor came up to her sooner than she expected and slipped out of her hands. Babowicz could do little to help cushion the fall but did prevent Russell's head from hitting the ground (rock) which may have prevented serious head injuries, as Russell was not wearing a climbing helmet.

Babowicz convinced Russell to lie still and then called for help. Tim Weiswasser, another climber in the area, went to Twin Owls to report the incident. Rangers Sauer and Logan were notified at 3:08 p.m. by ROMO Dispatch, as were trail

crew personnel in the area. Sauer and Morgan were dispatched with the medical pack and radio to the scene. Logan organized the carry out team and proceeded to the scene. Russell was treated for back injuries, splinted on a backboard and lowered down the rock and slopes using "scree evac" techniques.

Russell was turned over to the Estes Park Ambulance Service at 5:30 p.m. at the trailhead. At that time she still had feeling and movement in all extremities. Her condition was stable. (Source: Charles E. Logan, Rocky Mountain National Park)

Analysis

This particular form of descending accident has not appeared, fortunately, with the regularity it did in the previous decade. Perhaps a knot in the end of the rope would have helped, but Russell still would have had to reascend, it appears. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING UNROPED, PLACED NO PROTECTION Colorado, Mt. Ypsilon

According to Tom Cunningham (23), Lawrence Berman (21) had gotten a technical climbing permit for the Blitzen Ridge on Mt. Ypsilon. They were to bivouac on the route on the night of July 20, which they did. On the morning of July 21, the two began their ascent of the intended route via the Blitzen Cutoff. The two climbed about 1200 vertical feet above the Spectacle Lakes via a ramp type ledge. A short distance from the top of the Blitzen Ridge proper, they encountered a section of steep rock that they were either going to ascend or circumvent on a 20-foot high snow bank. Up to that time the two had not been roped up, as the climbing had been very basic in nature. The decision was made to ascend the snow in order to eliminate having to rope up for about 20 feet of climbing. Cunningham started up the snowfield, kicking steps. When he was about ten to 15 feet up the snow, Berman started following in his steps. Cunningham estimates that Berman had taken only a couple of steps up the snow when for some unknown reason he slipped and fell from the snowbank. The terrain immediately below the snowfield was very high angle and when Berman slipped from the snow, his fall continued for some 1200 vertical feet.

Cunningham immediately began a descent of the route he and Berman had just climbed. Near the bottom of the route he began finding equipment that had been carried by Berman. At the bottom of the route, Cunningham began a search, but was unable to locate him, so he climbed to the top of a snowfield that ran from the westernmost Spectacle Lake up to the rock base of the route they had just climbed. Searching the bergschrund (top of a snowfield that melts away from rock faces) he began finding blood spots on the snow and followed them down into a crevasse below the bergschrund. There he found Berman and checked for signs of life, but found none.

Cunningham then left his equipment at the bergschrund to mark the body location and started hiking out from Spectacle Lake. He met Dennis Irwin at the