

below the bulge and climbed the one-inch webbing sling directly to the climbing rope with an Eiger oval carabiner. He then climbed up about one more foot and reached over the bulge.

Newman lost his only foothold before he was able to find a grip. Kawanabe saw him slip and immediately took up all the slack in her grasp. Newman fell straight down, and the stopper held. Both climbers estimate that the fall was no more than seven feet; possibly less. Newman suffered only minor injuries and the loss of his glasses. He was able to climb back up the crack after resting on tension for two or three minutes.

When he reached the Eiger carabiner attached to the nut which had held, Newman saw that the gate was sprung and had jammed outside the body of the carabiner. The pin and notch were intact and apparently undamaged. There was enough room to slide the webbing of the nut sling free of the carabiner. Newman then downclimbed, showed the carabiner to Kawanabe, and put it into a pack. They completed the climb on a parallel route and retrieved the stopper on rappel. (Source: J. Newman and P. Kawanabe)

Analysis .

The carabiner gate was up and out when Newman placed it. Both climbers think that the articulation of the carabiner was vertical (correct) when it held the fall. There was no apparent damage to the Mammut kernmantle rope. The total weight of Newman, his clothing and his gear was no more than 170 pounds. (Source: J. Newman and P. Kawanabe)

FALL ON ROCK, FAILURE OF PITON AND NUT

Colorado, Mt. Royal

On Saturday, June 23, the Summit County Rescue Group (SCRG) and the Frisco Fire Department spent a long afternoon rescuing Bob French (47) from a rock face near Frisco.

French, a Breckenridge attorney and member of SCRG, was climbing a 10,385-foot point just north of the summit of Mt. Royal near the mouth of Ten Mile Canyon. About 12:15 p.m., he was leading a pitch 50 feet above his climbing partner, Neil Haglov, when he fell 40 feet pulling his protection. He suffered a compound dislocation of his right ankle.

Haglov, the SCRG medical director also from Breckenridge, tied French's rope off to prevent him from falling further, then lowered French a short distance to a small ledge, where Haglov splinted the injured leg.

Haglov then lowered French another 30 feet down the rock face to a larger ledge, where the two climbers were more comfortable. Waving and yelling, Haglov attracted the attention of two bicyclists on the bike path in Ten Mile Canyon. The bicyclists rode into Frisco and reported the incident to the Frisco Fire Department.

Using the public address system on a fire department vehicle while the climbers on the mountain used gestures to respond to questions, the fire department personnel were able to confirm that one of the climbers had injured his leg. SCRG and the fire department then responded with several people who went up to the base of the rock face. French's leg was resplinted with a Stevens Pass splint, then Haglov and Jon

Gunson of SCRG brought French down the last 70 feet to the base of the cliff. Members of the SCRG and fire department then evacuated him the rest of the way. (Source: Dave Thorson, Summit County Rescue Group)

Analysis

French pondered his move for ten to 15 minutes, recognizing the limits of his ability and that his protection might not hold if he fell. He took the calculated risk and lost. (Source: Dave Thorson, from a conversation with French)

RAPPEL FAILURE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, NO HARD HAT, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

Colorado, Mt. Royal

On Monday, July 2, the Summit County Rescue Group (SCRG) rescued the second fallen climber in nine days from Mt. Royal.

Ron Swett (21) and two companions, Brian Pence and Terry Tiritilli, also from Dillon, were descending the northeast side of Mt. Royal about 3:30 Tuesday afternoon. They had used a looped flat webbing sling tied with a square knot and doubled around a tree as a rappel anchor.

Shortly after Swett began to rappel on a double rope through the anchor, the square knot in the anchor worked itself loose and the anchor gave way. With nothing to hold the rappel rope above him, Swett fell about 40 feet, landing on his head and suffering severe scalp lacerations and a closed head injury.

After the fall, Tiritilli stayed with Swett while Pence descended to Frisco to get help. Pence went to a residence at the base of Mt. Royal, where the occupants called the Sheriff. Officers Tolbert and Mikesell responded and the SCRG was called out. SCRG arrived at the base area at 5 p.m. and reached the accident site about 800 feet up on the side of the mountain by 5:30 p.m.

Swett was comatose and combative as Bob Arcieri of SCRG examined him. Direct radio communications were established with Dr. Lackey at Summit Medical Center, who advised SCRG members with the victim on treatment.

At 6:15 p.m., SCRG started the scree evacuation to the base of the mountain, and Swett was en route to Summit Medical Center by ambulance at 7:10 p.m. He was later flown to St. Anthony's Hospital in Denver, where he remained in critical condition in the intensive care ward on Tuesday morning. He was well enough to be released, however, by July 9. (Source: Dave Thorson, Summit County Rescue Group)

Analysis

None of the three climbers were wearing climbing helmets, and they apparently did not tie any safety hitches when they tied the square knot that failed. Swett had recently moved to Summit County from Nebraska and had been climbing for about a year. (Source: Dave Thorson, Summit County Rescue Group)

FALL ON ROCK, FAILURE OF NUT

Colorado, Lumpy Ridge

On July 15, Dave Trout (21) and Gary Buckham (19) started climbing a route on the Book, believed to be just west of the Kors route. Buckham had run the rope out as far