

LOSS OF CONTROL—VOLUNTARY GLISSADE, FAULTY USE OF CRAMPONS, INEXPERIENCE**Washington, Mt. Rainier**

About 10:30 a.m. on July 31, 1980, Donald Morgan (48) who was leading one of two roped teams descending the Emmons Glacier, lost control of his sitting glissade when he dropped his right leg; this caused his crampon to catch in such a way that it forced his leg under his body. As a result, he sustained an open fracture of the tibia just above the ankle. The group consisted of nine members, of whom only five members of the lower rope team descended to Camp Schurman to report the injury. Morgan's leg was splinted with two pickets and he was put into two sleeping bags. By 5:30 p.m., the weather had deteriorated and Morgan was becoming hypothermic. A helicopter evacuation was called for and completed by 8:40 p.m. The evacuation was complicated by 100 mph-winds (caused by prop wash) creating a -15°F wind chill factor, the need to raise the litter vertically through the hatch, and a winch that wasn't working properly. (Source: Mark Eidemillar, Mt. Rainier National Park)

Analysis

According to the sign-out registration, Morgan's previous experience consisted of hiking to Camp Muir three times. Glissading with crampons on, even for an experienced person, is a delicate exercise. The temptation to drop a foot for use as a rudder can be great and, for the beginner, an involuntary reaction. Glissading requires practice. For the uninitiated, it would be better to walk down. In general, removing crampons before glissading is advisable. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL THROUGH ICE BRIDGE**Washington, Mt. Olympus**

On August 15, 1980, Peter McKay (29) broke through an ice bridge while descending from Mt. Olympus. He punctured his left leg in the area of the knee. By the next day he was unable to walk until late in the afternoon. He was able to make it out on his own. (Source: Mike Hamblen, Olympic National Park)

Analysis

This accident is included to show the variety of moat, crevasse, and bridge problems this year. Also, crampons complicated matters once again. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALLING ROCK, NO HARD HAT, INEXPERIENCE**Washington, Mt. Rainier**

On August 19, 1980, Doug Perry (26) was hit on the head by a large rock at 11,500 feet while descending Disappointment Cleaver. His injury was serious and he required a helicopter evacuation.

At the time of the accident, Perry and his partner, Gerald Riendeau (26) were off route 10-15 feet at a point where the normal route leaves the snow and goes onto the rock because they saw a good spot to fill their water bottles and get a drink. Riendeau saw the eight-inch rock coming down toward them and yelled to Perry, who looked up and began standing at the same time. The rock hit him on the right side of the head.

Riendeau could get no verbal response from Perry but thought Perry understood him when he said not to move while he went for help. He did not tie Perry in when he left for

Camp Muir to get help. When the rescue group, consisting of park rangers and another climbing party, found Perry, he was 100 feet below the normal route. He had apparently moved himself or slid down the snow to within 20 feet of a steep cliff.

It was determined that Perry's condition was life threatening, so a helicopter was called in. The hoist was completed by 6:10 p.m. Perry was flown to the hospital in Tacoma in critical condition. (Source: Rick Kirschner, Mt. Rainier National Park)

Analysis

Rockfall on this route is common, both from natural causes and climber dislodgments. (On July 27, 1980, for example, there were 120 climbers on this route; one of them dislodged a rock which hit another climber in the forehead.) Park rangers warn each climbing party of this hazard, and two notices regarding same are posted in the check-out station. Additional complications in this case were: neither climber wore a hard hat; the experienced climber, Perry, was the one who got hit; and both their day packs slid down the Cleaver following the accident, leaving them without extra clothes, food, and headlamps. Riendeau, being inexperienced, didn't know that tying in an injured victim, especially if he is semiconscious, is essential if you plan to leave him. More importantly, he did not realize that by staying with such a victim on a route as heavily traveled as the Cleaver, he would be able to aid the victim until help arrived. (In fact, a party descended this route within an hour or two of the accident but did not see Perry because of his location.) When experienced climbers or guides take neophytes out, they should consider providing their companions with a few "just in case" procedures. This year, as in other years, the reader will observe that few guides and leaders were the accident victims. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING UNROPED

Washington, Lundin Peak

On October 11, 1980, Jerry Pruitt (33) assistant leader on a club climb sponsored by The Mountaineers, fell about 600 feet to his death after he slipped while descending Lundin Peak. The following is an edited account from the original by the trip leader, Dorothy Curren:

"The party left the Pacific Crest Trail parking lot at 8:10 a.m. on October 11. We reached the Red Mountain/Lundin Pass at 10:30 a.m. At 11 a.m. we were 50 feet south of the false summit and ready to climb down the 30-foot gully to the ledge which leads to the notch between the first and second false summits. Everyone put on hard hats at this point. I told the party that the gully was a little uncomfortable at one spot to down climb when one had not had a chance to see it and climb up it. A belay would be set up for anyone who wanted it. Pruitt climbed down and John Francini followed him. Bob McFann asked for a belay and the rest said they would use it since it was set up. Pruitt climbed part way back up to the gully to help these people over the difficult spot. He stood on a fairly large flat area off to the right side of the gully and above some trees growing out of the cliff below. He offered them verbal help about holds as needed. When all four were down, I coiled the rope and climbed down to the same flat area where Pruitt was waiting for me. We discussed the idea of belaying people down this spot and he felt it had been a good idea considering the abilities of the four climbers and their not being able to see it before climbing it. He said it was his first "Club" climb and he had not known what to expect. From this flat area the gully was reentered by going down to the left. I started down the route used by three of the other climbers away from the edge of