

**Analysis**

The victim was not wearing a hard hat and was using only a seat harness. (Source: T. Auger and T. Davidson, Banff National Park)

**FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING ALONE****British Columbia, Selkirk Mountains, Ridge between Mounts Castor and Pollux**

On April 21, 1982, a solo climber was ascending the ridge between Mounts Castor and Pollux. He had left his skis where the rock ridge began. On top of the ridge, he apparently walked out to the edge on a cornice to take a photograph. The cornice broke and he fell to the snow and ice below, suffering severe injuries: fracture of the left femur in three places, compound fractures of the right tibia and fibula, general lacerations to the head and back and exposure.

Another party, which arrived later that day, noticed the skis stuck up in the snow and investigated. They followed his tracks and then saw him on the ice field below. One member of the party skied down for help and the victim was recovered by Glacier Park Wardens using helicopter sling rescue. (Source: J.L. Turnbull)

**Analysis**

The victim was fortunate in being found the same day and not having to wait until the next day when his registration would have been overdue. (Source: J.L. Turnbull)

**FALL INTO CREVASSE, CLIMBING UNROPE****British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Bugaboo Glacier**

At 8 A.M., on July 21, 1982, Keven Donohoe (33), Jerry Murphy and Dan Prows were ascending Bugaboo Glacier, southwest of Snowpatch Spire, at an elevation of about 8500 feet. The glacier was snow covered and scattered with rock debris. There did not appear to be any crevasses.

The party was traveling unroped, with Donohoe about ten feet ahead of the others, when he dropped through a thin snow bridge over a two-foot-wide crevasse. He fell about 40 feet to where the crevasse narrowed, where he jammed. Murphy and Prows lowered a rope and prusiks to Donohoe who was able to tie in but could not prusik up the rope. They had started to pull him up when two other climbers arrived and, shortly after that, another two climbers. By 8:45 A.M., they had succeeded in pulling him out. He was very wet, in slight shock and had a suspected fracture of the upper right arm. He was wrapped in extra clothing, his head was lowered and his arm splinted.

Two of the climbers descended to the Conrad Kain Hut to report the accident; they then returned to the site of the accident with a rescue toboggan. They were accompanied by J. Timmins who brought first aid supplies and a radio.

Because of possible back injuries, it was decided to call for a helicopter evacuation; the message was relayed through the Conrad Kain Hut. The helicopter arrived at 12:10 P.M. and the victim was strapped to a backboard for the trip to the hospital at Invermere. (Source: S. Shaw and J. Timmins)

### **Analysis**

This accident could have been prevented if the party had been roped for travelling on the glacier. (Source: S. Shaw and J. Timmins)

### **FALL INTO CREVASSE, CLIMBING UNROPED, INEXPERIENCE British Columbia, Coast Mountains, Tchaikazan Glacier**

The accident occurred during the Alpine Club of Canada Vancouver Section summer mountaineering camp in the Tchaikazan Glacier area, 110 miles northnorthwest of Vancouver.

On August 5, 1982, a party of six was ascending Tchaikazan Glacier to establish a high camp. The glacier was bare ice up to about the 7000-foot level, then crevasses started to have bridging snow, with bare ice up to the edges. Above 8000 feet, the glacier surface became continuous snow.

Ross Lund (about 30) was ahead of the rest of the party most of the way up. When crossing one of the obvious crevasses, he stepped short onto the snow and broke through, landing on a snow ledge about 15 feet down. He was pulled out unhurt; the party continued unroped, since the crevasses could easily be seen and avoided.

At the start of the continuous snow, the party stopped to rope up. Lund set his pack down on snow and came back to the bare ice to tie in. With the rope in his hands, he stepped backward onto the snow and dropped through into a crevasse. He stopped about 50 feet down, wedged in an upright position.

Although Lund regained consciousness shortly after the fall, he was obviously badly injured. Although he was reached fairly quickly, there was difficulty in setting up a pulley rescue system. After some time, four other climbers arrived and assisted in raising Lund to the surface. Two of these climbers then set off for the base camp to radio for helicopter transport. However, Lund died from internal bleeding shortly after having been pulled from the crevasse. All of the ribs on his left side had been broken in the fall.

Radio communication to the outside had previously been unsuccessful but, on this occasion, the Vancouver operator was contacted. The nearest helicopter was too far away to come in before nightfall but arrived early the next morning to fly out the body. (Source: G.T. Barford and C.M. Tilley)

### **Analysis**

The accident would not have occurred if the victim had been careful not to step onto snow while unroped on the glacier. There were tracks across the snow where another party had travelled without incident earlier in the day. However, it was late in the afternoon when the accident happened and the snow may have softened. Although he had done considerable rock climbing, Lund was relatively inexperienced in glacier travel.

Although it would not have altered the final outcome in this case, speed in extricating a victim from a crevasse is often important. Rescue techniques should be reviewed and practiced by all climbers so that a rescue can be effected with a minimum of delay should the need arise. (Source: G.T. Barford and C.M. Tilley)