

FALL INTO CREVASSE, CLIMBING UNROPED**British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Howser Towers**

At 5:30 P.M. on August 8, 1982, a party of three approached the West Ridge route on South Howser Tower. They were at an elevation of about 9400 feet on the snow-covered glacier, when Daniel Dauwe (32) fell through a snow bridge into a crevasse. He stopped on a ledge in kneedeep water, about 50 feet down.

His companions lowered a rope with jumars and he was able to climb back up within 15 minutes. He was bruised all over, had a headache, had suffered slight shock and was soaked completely through. He was given warm clothing and the party then descended to the Boulder Camp Hut, arriving at 9 P.M. (Source: S. Shaw)

Analysis

The party should have been roped for travel over the snow-covered glacier. (Source: S. Shaw)

ROCK AND SNOW AVALANCHE, CLIMBING ALONE**British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Crescent Glacier**

At about 5 P.M., on August 19, 1982, a large rockfall from the summit area of Bugaboo Spire came down the east face and caused a snow avalanche on Crescent Glacier. The debris covered an area about 150 meters long and 200 meters wide at an elevation of 2600 meters.

A single person had been seen on the glacier ten minutes before the avalanche. After the slide, three people examined the debris area but found nothing. It was not known whether the person who had been seen moved clear of the line of fall before the slide occurred.

Inquiries ascertained that John Rutt (23), who was camping alone, had been looking for a climbing partner. His tent was checked at 10 P.M.; there was no sleeping bag which indicated that he might be bivouacking. On August 20, at 5:30 A.M., a further check of his tent was made. At 8 A.M., Parks Headquarters at Wasa was contacted by radio and the RCMP and Search and Rescue were alerted. At 10:35 A.M., after a check with other climbers in the area still had turned up no trace of Rutt, Parks Headquarters was again contacted and the search operation was activated.

The search team, including a dog and handler, reached the slide area by helicopter at 12:10 P.M.; later, a second dog and handler were brought in. Rutt's body was located by one of the dogs at about 2 P.M. (Source: S. Shaw and A. Larson)

AVALANCHE**British Columbia, Rocky Mountains, Mount Robson**

On August 25, 1982, the RCMP in Valemount was contacted by family members of two climbers who had failed to return to work on the expected date. They had expressed interest in climbing a number of mountains, mostly in Jasper National Park. One of the routes was the Emperor Ridge on Mount Robson and it was decided to initiate a helicopter search there.

The bodies of the two climbers were discovered in the west bowl of Mount Robson. It appeared that one of them had been leading down a gully from the 10000-foot level in the bowl and had reached a ledge where he had put in a stopper. He was about to tie into it, when the second climber, who was about 300 feet above him, was hit by an avalanche which carried him down the gully. The rope hung up on a rock 150 feet above the first climber. When the rope tightened, the second climber's tie in to his harness failed and he was swept down to about the 7500-foot level, halfway down the fan. The first climber was found, still tied into the rope, on the ledge where he had suffered head injuries either from being hit by a falling rock or, more likely, from being violently pulled against the rock when the rope tightened. Both climbers were probably buried by the avalanche. It is presumed that the accident occurred four or five days before the bodies were found. (Source: D. Stinson, Jasper National Park)

Analysis

There had been a considerable amount of new snow and recent avalanche activity in the Mount Robson area.

There is no way of knowing why the climbers appeared to have been descending the gully in the west bowl under hazardous avalanche conditions or why they were tied in to the ends of the 100-meter-long, 9 mm rope, rather than traveling with the usual, much closer spacing. It is possible that, because of poor weather conditions, they were climbing in clouds which caused poor visibility. (Source: D. Stinson, Jasper National Park)

AVALANCHE, HYPOTHERMIA, FROSTBITE

British Columbia, Coast Mountains, Mount Sheer

On Saturday, November 27, 1982, six youths and their adult leader were climbing Mount Sheer on showshoes. A total of 40 centimeters of snow had fallen during the previous two days and a few more centimeters fell on Saturday. Temperatures had been cold earlier in the week but had warmed to just below freezing as the storm came through.

The party had turned back and, at about 4 P.M., were descending an open slope that forms the top of a large west-facing bowl, just below the summit. As they moved down the slope, they triggered a 30-centimeter-high, 10-meter-wide, soft slab avalanche that carried them down about 200 meters into a shallow gully. Five members of the party were partially buried and two were completely buried. All extricated themselves or were quickly located and dug out, with the exception of Patrick Pattison (17), who had been near the bottom of the slope when it slid. After 20 to 30 minutes, Pattison was found buried under about 1.5 meters of snow. He was unconscious, with no apparent heartbeat or breathing.

The leader of the group immediately started CPR and asked one youth to descend and call for help on a radio that had been stored with some overnight gear lower on the mountain. Using a tarp, the others constructed a crude windbreak to protect themselves from the cold.

At 5 A.M. on November 28, a rescue party reached them and determined that Pattison was dead. The other youths were suffering from various degrees of hy-