

climbers were picked up and also evacuated to the hospital. All suffered some degree of frostbite on their feet, hands or faces. Three climbers had been successful in reaching the 16644-foot summit. (Source: L. Freese, Kluane National Park)

### **Analysis**

The weather during the climb was probably normal for this time of year. The temperature in the valley bottom at the start of their ascent was minus 40°C.

During their climb, they experienced temperatures of minus 40°C with 40 kph winds and were forced to bivouac in the open for one night. They climbed rapidly and possibly suffered from some degree of altitude sickness that may have hampered their abilities to care for themselves in view of the extreme weather conditions that they experienced. Winter mountaineering in this area is restricted by reduced daylight hours and extremes in weather. Winter temperatures of minus 50°C are not uncommon and wind velocities can be very high. All these factors should be considered before winter ascents in the area are even contemplated. (Source: L. Freese, Kluane National Park)

## **AVALANCHE, FROSTBITE**

### **Yukon Territory, Saint Elias Range, Mount Logan**

A party of seven climbers from Colorado was attempting an unclimbed north ridge of Mount Logan. About 11 A.M. on June 11, 1982, their camp at about 15,500 feet was struck by an avalanche. Two members of the party, who were outside their tents when the avalanche struck, were swept about 200 feet below the camp. They climbed back to the campsite and were able to dig out two other members of the party. These four then dug for the remaining climbers, using their hands and whatever tools were available. After another two hours, they discovered the body of one other climber. Throughout their search, they had found no air pockets or signs of life and, at that point, decided to see to their own survival as it was storming and they needed shelter.

On June 12, another slide covered the area. On June 13, they were again able to excavate at the site to look for the radio which would assist in saving their lives. They managed to uncover the bodies of two members of the party and the radio. However, they never did discover the third body.

About 4 P.M. on June 13, as weather was again moving in, they packed up what gear they could and moved down to the point where they were eventually picked up around noon on June 16. Three of the surviving four climbers suffered some frostbite on their feet and hands. (Source: L. Freese, Kluane National Park)

### **Analysis**

There is probably no way to avoid avalanche hazard on this route and it is not known whether a safer campsite could have been found. It was fortunate that these climbers had a radio and were able to obtain assistance. (Source: L. Freese, Kluane National Park)