

a hand-held flashlight. Footwear consisted of tennis shoes inside rubber overboots, with crampons strapped on loosely. They were tied together with seven or eight meters of black polypropylene rope. They had not signed out for their attempted ascent. (Source: *Bergtrage*, Mountain Rescue Council, Seattle, 83-16)

SLIP ON SNOW, CLIMBING UNROPED, BAD WEATHER

Washington, Mount Shuksan

On October 3, 1983, Gary Lum (32) was descending with his climbing partner, Len Sederhahn, when he slipped just below the summit and fell an estimated 100 meters, sustaining head injuries. Sederhahn and Rick Corey, a member of another climbing party that had seen the fall, stayed with Lum, while Corey's partners descended to secure help. The weather prevented a helicopter liftout, so Whatcom County authorities arranged for Bellingham MRC to be supplied with more field personnel. On October 4, Lum was evacuated to St. Luke's Hospital in Bellingham by a park service contract helicopter where he was found to be suffering from facial lacerations, mild hypothermia, a head injury and various bruises and scrapes, but was in stable condition. (Source: *Bergtrage*, Mountain Rescue Council, Seattle, 83-18)

FALLING ICE

Washington, Snoquera Falls

On December 28, 1983, Chris Gentry (19) and Kurt Fickeisen (19) were ice climbing on Snoquera Falls when giant chunks of ice broke away from the falls and bombarded them.

They had planned to climb to a huge ledge on the falls, about 30 meters up, work their way over to one side to some trees, anchor their ropes, and rappel down. At 1130, they reached the base of the falls.

Gentry was standing a few yards back from the falls, belaying his friend, who had moved about three meters up the vertical ice and planted both his ice ax and ice hammer firmly into the falls. Both men wore helmets.

Then, from a point about 45 meters above them, a mammoth ice chunk disintegrated and tumbled down in jagged shards, some man-sized, upon the two climbers.

"It was a huge rumble that sounded like about ten freight trains," Fickeisen said. They had about three seconds to react.

"I had both my tools set firmly; they just wouldn't budge." Fickeisen looked up and saw the icefall hurtling down. "I tried for a couple of seconds to pull them loose so I could jump down. Then I just pulled myself into the face of the ice. I could feel those chunks hitting really hard on my helmet. That helmet saved my life."

Fickeisen said, "I could feel it for a couple of seconds then I got knocked out." When he came to, he dug himself out and used his good arm to dig out Gentry. He rolled Gentry over and found him unconscious, bleeding from the mouth, and taking harsh deep breaths. Fickeisen said he was just too weak and overwhelmed with pain to haul his friend away from the falls, so he covered him with a parka and sweater and limped down the mountain to Camp Sheppard, a trek that took some four hours.

Fickeisen wobbled into the snow-covered camp at 1730 and told Kathleen Utterbach, chaperon of a visiting church youth group, that his injured climbing partner was still up at the falls. Fickeisen was taken by ambulance to Overlake Hospital in Bellevue.

Fifteen rescuers from Enumclaw's Rescue 1 and the Greenwater Fire Department, called in to find Fickeisen's climbing partner, headed into the accident area in the darkness of early evening. They were able to bring Gentry down to the road by 0015 in spite of worsening conditions. He died 15 minutes after he was placed in the ambulance. (Source: *The Seattle Times*, December 29, 1983, and *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, December 30, 1983)

Analysis

The falls, according to Max Eckenberg, a ranger stationed at the Boy Scout camp, "has layers which break off (and sound like) sonic booms when we get a rising temperature like we had today." (Source: *The Seattle Times*, December 29, 1983)

FALL ON ROCK, FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE, FAILURE OF NUT West Virginia, Seneca Rocks

On June 5, 1983, Brian Garrity was leading out on the first pitch of Conn's East (5.4) when he got off route and found himself on much harder rock, somewhere in the vicinity of Soler. He lost his grip and fell. The topmost piece of protection held only long enough to turn Garrity upside down before it failed, resulting in a fall of about 12 meters. He hit a ledge headfirst on the way down. After dangling at the end of his rope for a few seconds, head down, Garrity got himself turned upright, but then found himself in serious trouble. He was bleeding considerably from cuts on his head and face, and needed to get off the wall as quickly as possible; however, his climbing rope had gotten jammed and his belayer, John Gorde, was unable to lower him down.

Lin Murphy and Parker Hill rushed to the fallen climber's aid and began the rescue operations. Hill rappelled down to the injured man while Murphy lowered another rope and set up an anchor for lowering the climber to Broadway Ledge. After tying a new rope to the accident victim, Murphy gently lowered him, while Parker assisted, preventing further injury.

On Broadway Ledge, Sallie Greenwood began administering first aid while others went to notify the authorities and obtain a Stokes litter from The Gendarme. Others set up the necessary anchors and pulleys for lowering the Stokes litter.

The victim was then transported down to Roy Gap Road where he was placed in a vehicle and taken to a hospital in Petersburg. Later it was learned that Garrity's skull had been fractured. (Source: Peter Grant in *Up Rope*, Volume 38, No. 6-7, June-July 1983)

FALL ON ROCK Wisconsin, Devil's Lake State Park

On May 15, 1983, about 1415, the South Shore Office was notified that there had been a fall on the East Bluff. About 1420 I went to the fall site. About 1425, Officers