

or block of well-wedged rock. Having a long distance between the anchor points and belayer doesn't work unless the force of pull is going to be direct and the sling material is of a nonstretch type—such as dacron. This accident could have culminated in the same manner as the similar one reported from the Adirondacks. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON SNOW, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, NO HARD HAT **Wyoming, Tetons**

Loren Sheffer (age unknown) was descending from an attempt on the Grand Teton via the Exum Ridge, when he slipped on snow just above the Spalding Falls area of Garnet Canyon. Sheffer wasn't sure what caused the slip, but he did have on a pair of Vibram-soled hunting-type boots which were not really designed for mountaineering. When he fell, he gained speed on the snow quickly. (It had been raining heavily during the past 24 hours.) The snow was, in his words, "soft and slushy." He made an attempt at self-arrest with the Lowe Big Bird ax he was carrying, but lost it as he tried to "jam" it into the snow. At that point, he was sliding in a feet-first, stomach-on-the-snow position. After losing the ax, he rolled over on his back and sat up trying to see where he was headed, and dug his heels in to check the speed. In his words, "The slush and spray coming off the heels of my boots blinded me, then I hit the rocks and I don't remember things about what happened at all."

After a period of unconsciousness and partial consciousness, about 30 minutes long, Sheffer, having sustained lacerations to his head and ear, as well as a badly bruised left leg, walked out of Garnet Canyon with his climbing partner. (Source: Larry Johnson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

In talking with Sheffer, I learned that his climbing background was limited. He did not know proper self-arrest techniques. Also, had he been wearing a helmet, his injuries would have been less severe. (Source: Larry Johnson and Craig Patterson, Rangers, Grand Teton National Park)