

SLIP, FALL FROM TOWER, INADEQUATE BELAY**British Columbia, Expo 86-Alberta Pavilion**

On June 17, 1986, the daily demonstration climbing of the Alberta Pavilion at Expo 86 had been suspended after a Calgary woman fell and broke her left ankle while scaling a 14 meter tower with a safety line that was too long.

Lori Kofhowski (22), a member of the University of Calgary climbing team, slipped and fell about four meters Sunday while scaling the tower on the three tiered pavilion.

Officials said she crashed feet first onto the roof of a lower section, breaking her left ankle and bones in her right foot.

Butch Greer, the leader of the University of Calgary climbing team, said Kofhowski slipped at the worst possible moment.

Small boards are bolted at random points along the side of the wooden tower to provide the climbers with the handholds and footholds. (Source: *The Seattle Times*, June 17, 1986)

Analysis

This climbing site, like "The Matterhorn" in Disneyland, could be considered a practice cliff and part of climbing's adjunct known as "buildering." When an accident happens in a setting like this, it only serves to reinforce the general notion among the non-climbing public that the sport is dangerous and that safety precautions do not work. This accident demonstrates that all the normal precautions of the sport need to be applied to these situations. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING ALONE, EXCEEDING ABILITIES**British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Crescent Spires**

On July 6, 1986, a solo climber (24) was attempting the Donkey Ears. It was cloudy and cool. About 2500 meters he came to a spot that was very difficult. In spite of being alone and unroped, he continued, slipped, and fell, severely injuring his right knee. His pack was lost in the fall, and so he had no access to warm clothing. Some other climbers in the area heard his calls for help. Three of them came and belayed him down off the ridge. A park ranger arrived, and called in a helicopter once the injured climber was down on the snow. His knee was possibly broken or dislocated. (Source: J. Timmins, Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park)

Analysis

The climber was fairly experienced, but should have been more aware of his personal limits on rock. (Source: J. Timmins, Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park)

FALL ON SNOW AND GRASS, NO COMMUNICATION, WEATHER**British Columbia, Selkirk Mountains, Anemone Pass**

On July 27, 1986, the inhabitants of a mountaineering camp at 2100 meters awoke to a grey day with rain and low cloud. By 0800, the rain had eased off, and the climbers could look north across an alpine basin and glimpse the surrounding peaks and a small hanging glacier. While many opted for tents and books, five decided to go hike the basin, with no clear objective except to "get out."

They headed west along a prominent ridge system leading to the pass at the head of Yellow Creek. At a ridge that required snow walking, kicking steps, and ice axes, one of them turned back. The remaining four climbers reminded each other to think about safety and technique. Descending the ridge to the pass was a pleasant glissade out of the fog. From the pass, they followed a ledge system that seemed to lead to the eastern extremity of the basin overlooking McNaughton Lake.

After their lunch stop, it was snowing in large wet flakes, but they decided to continue at a slow pace. At a small snowy side basin, they glissaded and practiced self-arrests. Then they headed up into fog and snow, above a short band of cliffs. At first they were walking on heather laden with wet snow or slush. Farther on, the slope became very steep and the heather turned to grass with wet snow.

At 1430, in a shallow gully, the second in line (30) lost the traction of her boot edge, and fell on her side. The person ahead called to self-arrest, and she rolled face-in to do it, but lost her grip on the ice ax. She slid out of sight very quickly, and fell about 150 meters. A search below the cliff band revealed that she had been killed by the fall. (Source: Michael Brewster, Kootenay Mountaineering Club)

Analysis

Moments before the fall, the last member of the group decided to head up to the top of the ridge to avoid the steep gully, and told the person immediately in front. Everyone knew that the hazard was building up, but there was no designated leader who, with the weight of responsibility, would act in a conservative decisive manner and order a halt or a discussion. A word from any of the four could have influenced the group to turn back, but they were all strong climbers, and may have been reluctant to express any fears that they had. In a hazardous situation, nothing should be left unsaid. (Source: Michael Brewster, Kootenay Mountaineering Club)

SLIP ON ROCK, FALLING ROCK

British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park

On July 28, 1986, a party of three was returning to the Conrad Kain hut after climbing in the afternoon. At 1630, about five minutes above the hut, they were descending an easy but wet rock gully. Two of them were down out of the gully, and looked back to see the other (27), only three meters or so away, slip on a rock. The fall caused the rock to loosen, and as a result other rocks higher up loosened as well. Two large (roughly one meter) rocks rolled over her.

A helicopter was called immediately, and also a stretcher was taken up from the hut. CPR was attempted, and the victim was flown to Invermere Hospital. However, the injuries proved to be fatal. (Source: J. Timmins, Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park)

Analysis

The accident might have been avoided by taking a different route. However, this route had been used many times before without incident. (Source: J. Timmins, Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park)

INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, FATIGUE, SLIP ON ICE

British Columbia, Selkirk Mountains, Adamant Glacier

On August 4, 1986, a party of four left camp around 0630 to climb East Blackfriar. It was