

(less steep although very rugged) area where we bivvied for the night. I was not in great pain but took one Benadryl to sleep that night. The weather was beautiful (thank God)!

The chopper from St. Luke's was unable to land, so a Navy chopper from NAS Whidbey finally came out. (Source: Katrina Kretsinger)

Analysis

The large pack saved my neck and head. (Need) better self-arrest techniques (and) better map reading/orienteering skills. (Source: Katrina Kretsinger)

INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT FOR NOCTURNAL DIURESIS, WEATHER

Washington, North Cascades

On August 19, 1988, four veteran mountaineers set out to ascend the West Ridge of Eldorado Peak in the North Cascades of Washington. The group was surprised by high winds, rain, and snow and was forced to make camp at 2030 meters. Equipped primarily for a summer climb, the oldest climber, who has predictable nocturnal diuresis at altitude, had forgotten his usual "pee bottle," a zip-lock bag. Undaunted by his forgetfulness, the climber fully opened one of the four 25 oz. cans of Foster's Ale, carried to high camp by one of his compatriots, to use as a substitute. During one of his nocturnal awakenings (necessitated in part by prior ingestion of the contents of the can), high winds and snow made impeccable maneuvering difficult, and he incurred a superficial laceration from the sharp edges of the can. Excessive blood loss was prevented by a firm squeeze technique; and so as not to foreshorten their trip, steri-strips were quickly applied longitudinally. This technique provided painless, effective closure of the two centimeters horizontal laceration. With no further trauma or change in morphology of the injured part, the steri-strips lasted for an adequate length of time to permit an uneventful descent. (Source: R. B. Schoene)

(Editor's Note: While no category exists for this kind of accident in our data base—nor do we intend to create one, this candid account is included for the readers' edification. With thanks to the members of this group, R. B. Schoene, T. F. Hornbein, W. Q. Sumner, and F. Dunham, we hope the most important member has fully recovered....)

FALLING ROCK, FAILURE TO TEST HOLD, NO HARD HAT

Washington, Cascade Mountains

On Saturday, August 20, 1988, my climbing partner Meryl Douglas and I, Stephen DiBiase (32), set out on what was to be an easy Class 2 hike up Cashmere Mountain (2757 meters) near Leavenworth. We brought a rope, hard hats and other rock climbing gear for any attractive rock we might encounter. About the 1500 meter level, the slope became greater than 70 percent with a couple of ten to 12 meter vertical cliffs. Though we could have continued following the stream bottom, we were anxious to get out of the woods and onto the rock, so we began to stray to the left (east) into rocky terrain.

The cliff climbing was very easy until I reached the top of the second cliff, the edge of which consisted entirely of loose rock. Only one large rock had any hope of

being attached to the mountain, so, without adequate testing, I put my weight to it for a quick mantle move to the top.

It pulled out straight away and both rock and I were airborne. I tried to distance myself from my flying companion and the thought, "There is nothing more I can do," went through my mind before I reached earth again.

I fell about ten vertical meters. First impact was on a steep, smooth boulder with the upper portion of my external frame pack. I bounced into the air again, completed one somersault and again landed on my pack. Another short bounce and I landed on my side and rolled a few turns before coming to a stop just short of the first vertical cliff.

My partner soon arrived, bandaged my head wound, got me onto a mat, covered me with a sleeping bag and began a full damage assessment. Apparently my head wound was just a laceration, not an impact wound. There were no broken bones but many cuts and bruises. After about an hour of rest, we decided I was well enough to hike out. At first I was lowered by my partner. Later, I lowered myself down the steep Class 2 terrain while my partner carried the contents of both our packs.

The injury most in need of medical attention was the head laceration, requiring seven sutures to close. (Hard hat in pack, not on head!) The most disabling injury was torn tendons in the right arm caused when the packstrap caught the full impact of the fall of my body. (Still impaired four months later.) (Source: Stephen DiBiase)

Analysis

Be aware of dangers even when the climb appears very easy. *Always wear* the hard hat in steep, rocky terrain. An external frame pack offers a lot of protection. I was a loose rock gambler whose day had come. (Source: Stephen DiBiase)

FALLING ROCK

Washington, Mount Rainier

A climb of Little Tahoma (3368 meters) was organized by the Seattle Mountaineers as part of their basic climbing course. The party of five left the trailhead at 0815 on August 22, 1988.

The party reached the top of the Whitman Glacier shortly before 0900. All members appeared to be in good condition and competent to complete the ascent. The party continued to the summit, arriving shortly after 1000 and staying approximately 45 minutes.

At 1330 the party was descending the upper Whitman Glacier along its northeastern edge. About the 2970 meter level, the glacier narrows and steepens to 40 degrees as it falls to the lower Whitman. Phil Langford (31), who was descending at the front of the first rope, had passed around an area of hard ice and was continuing onto the steeper area below it. Two large rocks, each approximately 40 centimeters square, started to slide downhill off the hard ice toward the first rope team. The rocks, which had been resting on the snow, began to slide as the snow melted off, exposing the hard, clear ice underneath.

The climbers on the second rope saw the rocks beginning to slide, and loudly shouted, "Rock! Rock! Big Ones!" Brent Hostetler and Ken Brameld on the first rope repeated the shout, but Phil Langford did not seem to hear at first. (Langford has no memory of this part of the events.) The sound of water running down the shallow