

snow/ice conditions or climber experience levels do not favor self-arrest. (Source: Jeff Scheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

## **FOOTHOLD DISINTEGRATED, FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT, NO HARD HAT**

### **Oregon, Mount Washington**

August 16, 1992. The Chimney of Space route begins at a belay stance about 20 feet off the ground. The lead climber (30) led off by ascending a narrow, diagonally upsloping ramp. He used some existing slings and placed other slings over rock horns so there were four placements along the ramp. At the end of the ramp he placed a small camming device and proceeded face climbing up about 10 to 12 feet. He was preparing to place another piece of protection when his toe hold failed and he yelled, "Falling."

He fell feet first, facing the rock, striking the ramp 10 feet below, and sailed backward off into space (head down). About ten feet below the ramp, the rope pulled tight on the fifth piece of protection (the camming device) and it pulled out. The belayer felt very little pull due to rope drag. The leader then continued falling and pendulumed on the fourth piece of protection. It held and the leader's downward fall was arrested, but he then swung (head down) into the rock face below the ramp striking it with his left knee, left elbow, and head. After holding the fall, the belayer called out but received no response. He lowered the leader, who was out of sight, about 15 feet—until slack developed in the rope—and then secured the rope off to the belay anchor before scrambling to where the leader had been lowered.

Due to rope drag, the leader was not on the ground, but was within reach of the belayer who cut the climbing rope and carefully lowered the unconscious climber to the ground. The climber's injuries were assessed and first-aid was administered by the belayer.

The two climbers on the adjacent West Ridge route were made aware of the fall and resulting injuries. They continued to the summit where they came upon a climber with a handheld amateur radio who was able to call for help. An Air Force Reserve rescue team evacuated the injured climber by helicopter.

### **Analysis**

Although I did check the holds, I would certainly do so quite thoroughly in the future—especially in the Cascades. Regardless of comfort level, always be prepared for a hold to give out. The absence of my helmet aggravated the situation as well. This was a bad oversight in preparation. Perhaps I might also have placed protection more frequently. (Source: The climber)

## **FALL ON ROCK, EXCEEDING ABILITIES, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT**

### **Oregon, Mount Hood**

On October 25, 1992, Terry Beggs (20) and Don Ming (20) started out to "hike" to the summit of Mount Hood. Their clothing consisted of jeans, T-shirts, and work boots. They carried no equipment other than a camera. Just before sunset, the pair reached the base of the Hogsback above Crater Rock and decided to turn back. During the descent, Beggs lost his footing, slipped, and sprained his ankle. They both decided to spend the rest of the night on a rock ledge, sharing one long sleeved shirt between them. Meanwhile, a concerned parent notified the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office of the overdue "hik-