

the first three toes of both feet. Dr. Grissom recommended that due to the severity of the frostbite injury and possible damage that would occur if Manelshagen climbed down, she should be evacuated if possible. Manelshagen was flown out 24 hours later to the 7,200 foot base camp on the East Fork of the Kahiltna Glacier and transported by fixed wing to an Anchorage hospital.

### **Analysis**

The Helmut Expedition ignored the frostbite Manelshagen suffered while climbing to Denali Pass and decided as a group for Manelshagen to stay another day in order for the other two members to attempt the summit. The “ESPN” Expedition advised the Helmut Expedition to descend and seek immediate medical attention. Manelshagen was wearing double boots but with no overboots. She rewarmed her feet at 17,200 feet, but on the descent to 14,200 feet, she froze her feet for the second time. (Source: Daryl Miller, NPS Ranger, Denali National Park)

## **SLIP ON SNOW, INADEQUATE FOOTWEAR**

### **Alaska, Mount McKinley**

In June, 1993, I was on the West Buttress of Mount McKinley with six fellow Californians. Three days into the trip we were camped at the base of Ski Hill (7,700 feet). We had a dug-in kitchen with three steps leading down into it.

While going down these steps in my down booties, I slipped. My full weight came down on my left ankle which made a sound similar to cracking your knuckles. I lay there for a second or two and then blacked out. After just a few seconds, I regained consciousness. We immediately iced the foot (no shortage of that up there) and took medication to slow the swelling (antiinflammatories). There was quite a bit of swelling and discoloration for the next week or so.

Later, on our descent, an RMI guide related another similar story, this one also on Denali. A fellow guide wandering through camp slipped in her booties and sprained her ankle enough to have to leave the expedition.

Whenever I told my story, it seemed everyone had a “slipped in booties” story of their own. I read the Accidents book regularly and do quite a bit of climbing, mostly in snow. I thought, “If this is so common, how come I never heard of this?”

At the 14,200 foot camp another NPS Ranger, Mike Welsch, had a wonderful remedy. He recommended taking an old pair of ski skins and gluing two parallel strips (one facing in each direction) on the bottom of each bootie. Any similar adjustment would probably work as well and there is a lot of room for creativity here. (Source: Joe Byrnes)

*(Editor’s Note: Actually, this kind of mishap has been written up quite a few times in the past. I have not received a report of this type in several years. Climbers either use the skins remedy, or glue indoor/outdoor carpet to the bottom.)*

## **AVALANCHE, POOR POSITION AND TIMING, INEXPERIENCE**

### **Alaska, Mount McKinley**

On June 8, 1993, Bertha Ramirez (41) departed with the “Choolian” expedition headed for the 8,000 foot camp on the Kahiltna Glacier. The three member team was attempting the West Rib after losing the fourth member to altitude sickness on the West Buttress. They had reorganized at the 7,200 foot base camp. Ramirez was a solo climber