

raced down the mountain to the nearest telephone, while the other used a portable cellular phone. About 1700, Hood River County Sheriff's Office set up a command post at Cloud Cap Inn, whose parking lot served as a landing zone for the subsequent helicopter shuttles. Joint teams from the Hood River Crag Rats, Portland Mountain Rescue, and the USAF 304th Rescue Squadron participated in the lengthy rescue. Air operations were hampered by ceiling/power limitations of hot weather and forced the on-scene landing zone below the accident site by about 700 feet. The two injured survivors, Matthew Hunt (30) and Peter Monte (36), were airlifted off the mountain by 0100 Sunday. Recovery efforts were resumed at first light with the additional help of Corvallis Mountain Rescue. Similar snow conditions on Sunday caused two avalanche spotters to be posted, while recovery teams battled with soft snow and falling rocks. Mountain operations were completed by 1430.

Analysis

These inexperienced climbers were descending their ascent route too late in the day, thereby accepting the hazardous conditions of soft, slushy, high-angle snow with a dangerous runout. Such predictable conditions can be avoided by: a) starting the climb early enough to ensure that the descent is completed well before the heat of the day; b) planning the climb early enough in the season when the solar-induced instability is less severe; c) descending by a different, less hazardous route. (This option may require a planned car shuttle.)

At least twelve persons have died while descending this route, the previous accident claiming five lives in June 1981. (Source: Jeff Sheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

FALL ON ROCK, FALLING ROCKS, CLIMBING ALONE

Oregon, Mount Jefferson

On July 28, 1994, Larry Hermens (16) left Jefferson Park for a solo climb of a north side route of Mount Jefferson. On the 29th, Mr. Hermens failed to return, and a search was begun. During the evening a helicopter search revealed an unresponsive climber lying head down in a gully about the 9,500 foot level on the east face of the summit ridge. A second search on the 30th found the gully to be extremely raked by rockfall, and the climber could not be located. It was surmised that Mr. Hermens was swept down the gully and most likely into a crevasse. Due to copious rockfall, further recovery efforts were suspended. A party on the Jefferson Glacier route had sighted a lone climber above them on the 28th. A summit register entry for that date revealed that Mr. Hermens had reached the summit and expressed concerns about how to descend.

Analysis

It should be noted that nearly all of the accidents in the Oregon High Cascades this year occurred on descent. The Oregon Cascades consist of decomposing volcanic rock, snow and ice. *Early* starts with good knowledge of ascent and descent routes is essential. Care must be exercised as many climbs can be plagued with increasingly soft snow and rockfall as the day warms. (Source: Jeff Sheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY

Oregon, Cascades of Oregon, Three Fingered Jack

On August 5, 1994, three of us (Katie, Lyn, and myself) hiked into Summit Lake off the Pacific Crest Trail to set up camp. On Saturday morning we hiked up to the mountain via

the east side, stopping to put on our helmets at the beginning of the rocky ridge. We continued up and left our packs at the start of the horizontal traverse known as "The Crawl" and had planned to have lunch upon returning. After reaching the summit around 1300, we started to make our way down. Lyn Marx (40) wanted to lead "The Crawl" on the way down. We set up a tensionless anchor on a rock that was approximately 20-30 feet from the beginning of The Crawl. Shortly after Lyn disappeared around the corner, she screamed and the rock began to go taut. I put on the brake with the right hand and then tried to grab slack with my left hand since I had been letting out slack so she wouldn't have to pull on the rope. The slack I had grabbed with my left hand pulled through my hand, burning my fingers. We then saw Lyn at the edge of the ledge below; she was lying motionless.

We called to her but there was no response. Approximately two minutes later, she began to moan. I tied her off on the anchor and tried to get down to her by rappelling off the center loop of the rope; however, it did not reach her. I did not want to go on her rope since it was far away from the cliff face and also would have pulled on her. I finally figured out that I could rappel on the loop and transfer to her rope using a prusik. That worked and I was able to reach her. By that time she was sitting up and I did an examination of the head wound below her helmet, eyes, breathing, alertness, and other possible injuries. There was nothing that appeared to be broken or bleeding profusely. Since she was at the edge of the ledge, I wanted to get her in a more secure position for the safety of us both. I got behind her and lifted her under her armpits and moved her to the base of the rock so that she was sitting partially supported.

After stabilizing her at the base of the rock, I climbed up the face and onto The Crawl. Using webbing clipped into the piton and a prusik on the slope, I made a directional from the piton, so that the rope went along The Crawl and down to Lyn. By that time Lyn was trying to remove her harness and untie the rope. Katie then came over quickly along the fixed rope and went down to Lyn. I ran for help. I encountered a hiker approximately two miles down the PCT and told him what happened and to call 911. I then ran back up the mountain and went down to the ledge around 1600. Katie informed me that Lyn had continued to try to remove her harness in order to try to get to the sunlight but had eventually stopped and was generally quiet. We also partially elevated her head and legs. During this time Lyn was becoming more cognizant of her surroundings.

After several hours it began to get dark and we were concerned that we would be spending the night on the ledge. At one point Lyn asked me if I would go up on The Crawl and belay her out. Impressed with her awareness, we decided to try it. I climbed to the ledge and belayed Lyn and then clipped her into the piton, and then belayed Katie up. Faced with the possibility of essentially climbing The Crawl unprotected (since the rope, being tied off, did not reach the lower side of The Crawl), I decided to cut the rope so at least we would have some rope to belay her off the mountain. It was strange to cut the rope. It had a feel of finality, that we were now committed to our plan.

From The Crawl to the scree slope, I set up belay stations, sometimes only with a couple of knobs slung with webbing and a prayer to use as anchors. Katie walked in front of Lyn and gave her directions how to move while I belayed her. Finally we reached the scree slope and were met by the Sisters Fire Department. The first man to reach us started talking about what a bad hair day he was having. I finally asked if he would examine Lyn. He performed a brief examination and then we started down the scree. He carried a large rack of carabiners, but had no rope or other protection. We asked about the rope and he said they left it at the base of the hill. He was urging us to go down where he just came up. This was steeper and more rocky than the normal trail down. Lyn said, "Why can't we take the trail?" So we went down the standard

route. The other two rescuers also followed us down.

At the base of the scree slope there were other Sisters Fire Department personnel and a sheriff. We asked for water, but they had none extra. It was getting dark and cold and one of the SFD personnel (wearing only a T-shirt and jeans) was visibly cold, so we gave him one of our jackets. Lyn walked most of the way out on her own. At one point she rode in the litter but soon got out because it was too bumpy and cold. (They hadn't brought any blankets.) While hiking out, the other rescuers talked about other accidents in front of Lyn, which I found to be in poor taste. The Explorer Scouts met us at the Santiam Pass trail junction with water, flashlights, and blankets. Lyn then went in the litter again. At the trailhead the ambulance took Lyn to the Bend hospital around 1230. Katie and I followed the ambulance to Bend and spent the night there.

The following day Mardi Keltner met us at the trailhead and assisted in packing out our base camp. She also provided me with a safe journey home since I was exhausted and was not fit to drive. It was interesting to experience a rescue from the other side. (Source: Maryanne Reiter—who had trained with Corvallis Mountain Rescue)

FALL ON SNOW, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT—NO ICE AXE, POOR POSITION— ATTEMPTED SHORT-CUT Oregon, Mount Jefferson, Southwest Ridge

On August 6, 1994, Gabriella Klassen (43), along with three others in her party, was descending the Southwest ridge after having climbed to Red Saddle at 10,000 feet. At 1530 the party stopped at the 8,700 foot level when Ms. Klassen decided to take a "short-cut" across a 35 degree snowfield. While descending, she slipped and slid backwards down the snow slope 40 feet, striking her back on a rock. Ms. Klassen was stabilized by members of her party and an Outward Bound group who happened by. She was reached by rescuers the next morning and helicoptered off the mountain. She has since recovered from her injuries. (Source: Jeremy Adolf and Bob Freund, Corvallis Mountain Rescue)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, EXCEEDING ABILITIES, MISCOMMUNICATIONS Oregon, Blue River, Flagstaff Climbing Area

On September 17, 1994, I (Katie Mynes-Petty, 35) was third to climb the route "Deep Pockets." A top rope was set up and I was to drag up another rope to help set up another climb. We didn't fully communicate intentions, and decisions were made once I reached the top via yelling questions and answers to each other. Prior to my climb we didn't do any "buddy checks." I ended up doing a top belay for a large man. I had clipped in incorrectly, using a carabiner through a gear clip on my harness rather than the harness itself. Consequently, when Mike fell, I was ripped from the top. I broke Mike's 15 foot fall so he wasn't hurt. I fell 65 feet, was dragged for a while, then rolled over, hit the rock, broke my front tooth and ripped open my lips, then fell, luckily into a huckleberry bush.

I am fortunate and grateful to be alive. I will have little or no residual physical limitations. I aim to continue climbing and mountaineering.

Analysis

Do "buddy checks." Don't belay someone who's significantly larger than you. Triple check your anchor tie-in. Make sure you're tied in in three places. Communicate clearly before starting your climb. (Source: Katie Mynes-Petty)