

back and hip, with a “grating sensation” on movement.

Rescue coordinator Mark Magnuson requested the park contract helicopter, which arrived at Lupine Meadows at 1330. Ranger Eric Gabriel responded to the scene from the Lower Saddle, arriving about 1335. Ranger Bill Culbreath responded from the summit of Disappointment Peak, arriving at 1345. After obtaining patient information from Gabriel and consultation with medical control, Lanny Johnson, rangers Leo Larson and George Montopoli were flown to the Garnet Meadows with medical equipment. Newman was immobilized in a full body vacuum splint, placed on a backboard, and carried a short distance to the helicopter. He was flown from the scene to St. John’s Hospital, arriving at 1455. Newman was treated for severe, deep contusions to his lower back and hip.

Analysis

According to Newman’s climbing partner, the two had ascended to the Lower Saddle from their campsite on the Moraine early that morning. As Newman was not feeling well, they decided to return to camp. At the top of the Lower Saddle headwall, which was covered with steep, hard snow, Newman removed his crampons and initiated a glissade. Losing control and unable to self-arrest, he slid approximately 500 feet down the headwall, “tumbling” several times near the bottom until he came to rest at the runout of the slope. Newman was able to stand and, with assistance, self-evacuate down to the Garnet Meadows where he was unable to continue due to the pain. (Source: Mark Magnuson, SAR Coordinator)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY and PROTECTION

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Grand Teton, Owen-Spaulding

On July 4 at 0925, Jackson Hole Mountain Guide Allan Bard (44) took a fatal leader fall while guiding on the Owen-Spaulding Route on the Grand Teton. He and his client, Jay Wiener, were on a section of the route known as the Double Chimney when the accident occurred. Bard fell approximately 130 feet to the end of the rope before his fall was arrested. Other climbers in the area became aware of the accident and came to Wiener’s assistance, but they were unable to reach Bard. Grand Teton National Park climbing rangers learned about the accident and dispatched the Bridger-Teton contract helicopter and rescue team. A rescue team member rappelled to Bard at 1533 and confirmed that he was dead. Rangers traversed with Bard’s body to the Upper Saddle. Plans to evacuate the body with the helicopter were abandoned when a storm moved through the area. The rescue team spent the night at the hut at the Lower Saddle and returned to Bard’s location early on the morning of July 6. At 1008 they were able to use the contract helicopter to fly Bard to a heli-spot in Lupine Meadows where his body was turned over to Teton County Coroner Bob Campbell.

Analysis

A properly executed belay and placement of intermediate protection most likely would have made the difference between this being a fatality or a shorter fall resulting in only minor injuries to Allan Bard. According to guide Andy Carson and other guides in the area, it is not uncommon for guides to forego a belay on ground where a fall is deemed to be unlikely. The reason for this is both to enhance the speed of the ascent and because of a concern that an inexperienced client might pull the guide off the climb. In the mountain setting where weather is unpredictable and daylight is a precious commodity,

the speed of the ascent often equates to safety in the minds of mountain guides and some climbers. The time it takes to set up a belay can slow their ascent. Clients are often inexperienced at the art of belaying, and some guides prefer to climb without a belay and instruct the client not to touch the rope. This, of course, leaves no room for error on the part of the guide.

The equipment used by Bard and his client performed exceptionally well and probably had no bearing on the cause of this accident. The rope and harness took an extreme fall and was apparently undamaged. It was fortunate that a single stopper placed at the belay held or the fall would certainly have resulted in a second fatality. Both guide and client were properly clothed, and were equipped with climbing helmets, crampons, and ice axes.

It is not clear exactly why Bard fell from the Double Chimney. The conditions at the time of the accident were very poor, with snow and verglas, though the route was certainly within the abilities of Bard. The other climbers in the area did not observe any rock or ice falling from above that would have caused the accident. They did, however, describe rock and ice falling concurrently with Bard. It is possible that he pulled off a loose hold or that the debris that was observed was caused by his fall in the chimney.

There was an extended period of time between the accident and the first rescuer reaching Bard's body. Teton County Coroner Bob Campbell stated that only the immediate placement of a tourniquet could have made any difference in the end. It is unlikely that someone could have rappelled to Bard following the accident and properly treated his injuries fast enough to save his life.

Bard was climbing well within his abilities. He was well known and respected by other climbers for both his climbing ability and guiding. He apparently had an accident-free record throughout his career as a climber and guide. He was also reported to be very fit and well rested at the time of the accident. (Source: Rich Perch, SAR Ranger)

RAPPEL ERROR—INADEQUATE PROTECTION, FALL ON ROCK, INEXPERIENCE IN OUTDOOR CLIMBING, WEATHER

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Symmetry Spire

On July 7, around 1600, John Hehr (48) fell to his death when his rappel anchor on the Southwest Ridge route of Symmetry Spire failed. The rappel anchor failed while the climbing party (J. Hehr specifically) was descending the Southwest Ridge route after experiencing a significant storm about one rope length (50m) from the top of the route. He was accompanied on the route by two other climbers: his stepson, Demian Farnworth, and a friend, Kevin Kerwin. Angie Stika, the stepson's girlfriend, had accompanied them on the approach earlier that morning, but had turned around about 0730 because she was not feeling well. Two other climbers in the area, Mike Lanza and Gerald Prutsman, were the first to make contact with Hehr. (Farnworth and Kerwin were still descending.) After verifying that Hehr was dead and that Farnworth and Kerwin were all right, they departed the scene to report the accident. They encountered Ranger Julena Campbell on the Jenny Lake trail, reported the accident to her, and she radioed the initial report to Grand Teton National Park dispatch immediately. Grand Teton National Park climbing rangers were mobilized about 1900, and the Bridger-Teton contract helicopter was summoned. Rangers Jim Phillips and Ron Johnson were flown to the scene to confirm the fatality and check on the status of the other two climbing party members. Rangers Bill Alexander and Scott Guenther were dispatched to accompany and assist