

quickly enough. He purposefully dressed lightly since he thought being too warm would be a bigger problem than being too cold. In fact, he was able to sleep remarkably well each night even though he was wearing a single thin layer of wet cotton on his lower body and his upper body just had a thin wicking top with a Gore-Tex shell. The weather was 20-40 degrees F, and it snowed or rained a quarter-inch of moisture on the night of April 13.

This is an example of a positive attitude, resourcefulness, the acceptance of the responsibility to take care of one's self in the backcountry and a strong will to live. (Source: Dan Burgette, SAR Coordinator, Grand Teton National Park) *(Editor's Note: While not a climbing accident, this report is included for the reasons stated in the last sentence above. I anticipate there will be some debate as to how he might have splinted his foot—and, dare I say it, whether a cell phone might have been a good idea. Those of Mr. Seskun's generation would have done as he did, I suspect.)*

SLIP ON SNOW—TWICE, NO BELAY

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Mount Moran

On July 3, the Jones party signed out at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station as two separate groups of four to climb the Skillet Glacier route on Mount Moran. On July 4, they started across Jackson Lake in two small boats headed for the base on Mount Moran. Waves swamped their boats and they were rescued by NPS Rangers. On July 5, they were delivered to the base of Moran by a Signal Mountain shuttle boat. They climbed to the Skillet moraine and camped for the night. They left camp on July 6 at 0400 in three roped teams. Four of them retreated to camp at 0700, while Ben Boykin (40), Tom Jones (43), Steve Harris and Jeb Stewart continued to the summit, arriving around 1500. (They required 11 hours for the ascent. The average time for ascent is less than seven hours.)

During the descent, Tom Jones, who was not belayed at the time and had removed his helmet, slipped and slid about 1,000 feet down the "Handle" of the Skillet. Apparently he was not injured, and after he stopped sliding, continued his descent at a more sedate pace. As he attempted to turn the "Rock Island" on the south side, he slipped again, glanced off the Rock Island, cleared the bergschrund and came to rest on the low angled section of the "Pan." The members of the party who had turned back at 0700 saw him fall and went to his assistance. They were able to get Jones back to their camp and Jim called for help on his cell phone. The call was received by the SAR coordinator at 1930.

The contract helicopter arrived at Lupine Meadows at 2105, the pilot was briefed and then transported Rangers Weathermon and Jernigan with medical equipment to a landing zone near the patient's camp. Jones was placed on a backboard and in a litter while the helicopter returned to Lupine Meadows. As the patient was moved to the landing zone, the helicopter flew back to the glacier for a pickup about 2115, arriving at Lupine Meadows at 2120. Jones was transported to St. John's Hospital by Medic 1. (Source: Tom Kimbrough, NPS Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

It seems inevitable to have a Skillet Glacier incident. This one was classic for

the route. Most of the slides happen on the descent. We do not know whether Jones tried—or knew how—to self-arrest. Or if he had an ice ax. No matter. Skillet Glacier on Mount Moran = pay attention. (Source: Jed Williamson)

FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING ALONE AND UNROPED

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Mount Owen

On July 15 at 1810, Rene Steque (65) fell 300 feet on snow at the base of the Koven Glacier while returning after a successful ascent of Mount Owen. He had fallen two previous times before that without injury, but on the third fall, he slid into a boulder field at the base of the snow. A. Popinchaulk, who was camped on the Teton Glacier with his son and another teenager, witnessed the fall, and immediately climbed to Steque's location to assist him. Popinchaulk rendered first aid, moved Steque out of the line of rockfall (Steque was unable to move on his own), provided him with warm clothing and a sleeping bag, secured his son and friend at their campsite on Teton Glacier, and ran to the valley to seek help.

On July 15 about 0130, Popinchaulk contacted Ranger T. Kimbrough at Lupine Meadows, who in turn contacted the rescue coordinator, Ranger G. Montopoli. Rangers D. Bywater and M. Vidak were immediately dispatched with first aid and rescue gear, while arrangements for a helicopter and additional Rangers were undertaken. Rangers Bywater and Vidak arrived on scene at 0645 and evaluated Steque. Lanny Johnson, P.A. (GTNP Medical Control), was contacted and advised of the situation. Because of his medical condition and location, the decision to short-haul Steque from his location to Lupine Meadows was finalized.

At 0740, the contract helicopter arrived at Lupine Meadows. Rangers T. Kimbrough, J. Springer, and R. Perch assisted with operations at Lupine Meadows. Ranger D. Burgette, S. Guenther, B. Weathermon, with emergency hire Lane Burgette, were flown to the Teton Glacier, along with USFS helicopter manager Holly Higgins, arriving about 0750 and 0805. Ranger L. Larson served as spotter for the operation. L. Burgette was assigned to A. Popinchaulk's son and friend, who were "noticeably affected" after witnessing the accident. As a result, the two were immediately flown to Lupine Meadows with their equipment.

After arriving at the scene (about 400 feet above the landing site on Teton Glacier), Burgette initiated an IV and administered Ancef as per L. Johnson's instructions. Ranger S. Guenther acted as on-scene incident commander. Along with spinal immobilization, Steque was immobilized in right lateral recumbent position onto the litter, and short-hauled directly to Lupine Meadows, arriving at 0936. He was then transferred to GTNP ambulance and taken to St. John's Hospital, where he was diagnosed with a fractured pelvis, fractured right thumb, and a significant laceration to his head that required sutures. (Source: George Montopoli, NPS Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

Mount Owen is a long climb, even if done over the course of two days. By the time one descends, unless in top physical condition, fatigue can play a significant role in what happens. (Source: Jed Williamson)