

Route. Alberts was climbing about ten feet above his last piece of protection when he lost his footing, slipped, and fell, sustaining possible fractures to both ankles. Alberts' climbing partner contacted North Rim ranger Ed Delmolino at 9:30 p.m. Delmolino treated Alberts' injuries and monitored his condition through the night until rescue operations could begin the following morning. Park and local rescue teams raised Alberts up the North Chasm wall over 1,500 feet to the rim of the canyon. The mission took about five hours and over 25 rescuers to complete.

On July 9th, Martha Moses (41) fell while lead-climbing Cruise Gully after she and her partner abandoned a climb on the Leisure Route. Moses was climbing 50 feet above her first protection in intermittent rain when she apparently lost her footing, falling and tumbling about 80 feet and sustaining severe head injuries. Her partner contacted ranger Ed Delmolino, who responded along with a paramedic from a local EMS squad. The nighttime litter evacuation involved lowering her down the remainder of the gully in rain, lightning, and continuous rock falls.

Moses was then raised over 1,500 feet up the North Chasm wall to the rim and flown by helicopter to St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, where she underwent surgery for a skull fracture.

The entire operation took 12 hours and involved 50 rescuers and support personnel, including a number of local, county, and volunteer rescue squads. These two operations constitute the most significant technical raises to date in the park. (Source: Linda Alick)

(Editor's Note: We have had very few reports from Black Canyon of the Gunnison over the years.)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE PROTECTION

Colorado, Eldorado Canyon, Bestowal Crack

My son Chris (17), our friend Eric (17), and I traveled to Eldorado Canyon for guided climbing July 5th. After completing Bestowal Crack, we were in the process of walking off the backside and down the talus slope adjacent to the west face of the Bestowal, when, at 0930, we witnessed and were first responders to a 25-foot ground-fall, resulting in injuries and subsequent evacuation by ambulance.

As I recall, our guide Duncan Burke and I, had descended about half way down the talus slope with the boys following about 30 feet behind us. I think we were midway between the "Out To Lunge," and "Hair City" routes, as we passed a climber and belayer on the west face of the Bestowal. A quick glance at them left me thinking, "How asinine is that," because [there he was] 25 feet up, either setting a piece of pro or clipping into a piece, with one piece clipped about ten feet below him and an arc in the rope nearly reaching the ground, then going to the belayer standing on top of a five-foot boulder ten to 15 feet from the face being climbed.

As I looked back down to pick my footing I remember a flash of movement on the edge of my peripheral vision snapped me back to see the fallen climber on the bounce or just as he hit. He appeared nearly horizontal and about two

feet off the ground at that instant.

We scrambled over to find him dazed, lying on his back on a hump of ground and rock. The rope ran loosely from him up to the first piece of pro about 15 feet up, and then down, still in a pronounced arc, to the belayer on the boulder above where he landed. The belayer stood looking down and fairly calmly said, “Bummer, man,” but seemed pretty dazed by what he had witnessed and apparently was unable to render assistance at that time.

The boys ran down to the ranger hut at the entrance to the park to summon help. Duncan and I remained with the climber to prevent him from moving and packed our ropes under either side of his torso to take some of the weight off his back, which was lying directly on a ridge of rock.

After about 15 to 20 minutes, a ranger or park employee arrived, said he had EMT training, called in a request on his radio for an ambulance, and began assessment of the climber. By this time both ankles had swollen considerably, but on removal of his shoes, he could move all his toes.

As more assistance arrived, we left to continue our climbing. It appeared to taken a considerable length of time before the climber was finally loaded into an ambulance; my guess is around two-and-a-half hours, in spite of his being approximately 100 to 150 feet from the road, and as I remember, there was some sort of dispute over jurisdiction between different ambulances that arrived. (Source: Randy Roberts—50)

FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, INADEQUATE PROTECTION Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park, Longs Peak, East Face

On August 3 at 0700, Jeff Snyder (24) was leading over the icy Mills Glacier to the base of Stetner’s Ledges III (AI 1 5.8) on the East Face of Longs Peak. Snyder had planned to fix anchors in rock at the base of Stetner’s Ledges and then belay Joe Verela, Jr. and Joseph Verela, Sr. (ages unknown) across the ice. Snyder was using the party’s only ice ax and was wearing winter driveway gripper-type cleats over his shoes in place of crampons. Snyder was 60 feet out on the AI 1 ice without protection and only 10 feet away from rock protection possibilities when he lost his footing and began sliding. Snyder slid approximately 35 feet before self-arresting. He lacerated his right knee on sharp rock protruding from the ice. Snyder then dropped the ice ax to Joe Verela, Jr. so that Verela could get to him and help. However, before Verela could get to Snyder, Snyder lost his position and slid the remaining distance to the rocks. Verela bandaged Snyder’s knee and went for help. Rocky Mountain National Park rescuers responded and evacuated Snyder by litter and Flight For Life medical helicopter to Fort Collins, CO. Snyder underwent one hour of surgery and received 30 staples to repair the 10-inch long laceration.

Analysis

In this case, shortcuts led to long lacerations. It is a common yet sometimes dangerous practice among alpinists to skimp on equipment in order to cut back on weight. The Snyder party had only one ax and no real crampons among three persons. Modern ice axes are very lightweight, and there are many models of crampons to choose from that will work on a hiking boot in this sort of