

winds of 30 mph and a temperature of -40F. Adriano Martin (31) took off his glove-shells and, wearing only mid-weight liners, took photographs for several minutes. Martin was first aware of a cold injury to his fingers as they rested along the football field at 19,000 feet. The two descended the West Buttress and arrived at the 17,200-foot camp at 0930.

Martin's partner contacted NPS Ranger staff and VIP Sprott reported Martin as having "significant" frostbite on both hands. Climbers John Varco and Sue Nott volunteered to assist Martin down to the 14,200-foot camp. All four climbers descended without incident, Martin being short-roped. NPS ranger Shain and VIP Falley met the descending climbers at 15,200, but no assistance was needed.

Examination by the Ranger staff at the 14,200-foot camp revealed numbness and marked discoloration down to the first and second phalanges on all fingers except the thumbs. Patient history revealed that Martin and his partner had collectively consumed less than three liters of water since the start of their climb and had not slept in 32 hours. Given the extent of Martin's injuries and the weakened state of the two climbers, a continued descent to the 7,200-foot camp was deemed unsafe. NPS staff decided to re-warm Martin's injury, realizing that blistering would further inhibit a safe descent.

NPS staff continued care of Martin's injury until weather allowed for an air evacuation. At 0930 on May 30, Martin was evacuated by NPS Lama helicopter to the 7,200-foot base camp and transferred to a fixed-wing aircraft off the mountain for further treatment.

### **Analysis**

Being dehydrated was most likely the largest contributing factor to the extent of Martin's injury. The team stated that neither of them had taken any water at the onset their summit attempt and that of the four liters they brought with them, one froze. Taking off his over-mitts for several minutes on the summit undoubtedly compounded the situation. Climbers attempting the summit by any route are encouraged not only to bring extra water and a thermos, but a stove and fuel so they can maintain their water intake in the event of a mishap. (Source: Daryl Miller, South District Ranger)

## **HAPE, ASCENDED TOO FAST, FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Alaska, Mount McKinley, Cassin Ridge**

On the evening of June 14 the "Princes of the Puff of Smoke" expedition arrived at base camp to start their ascent of the Cassin Ridge. When the team arrived at the 14,200-foot camp on the evening of June 17, Bryan Feinstein (22) complained of feeling weak and short of breath. His companion, Barry Hashimoto, told him to rest in their tent while he made a carry to the West

Rib Cut-off (15,800 feet). When Hashimoto arrived back at camp, he found Feinstein weaker and vomiting. The following morning, after advice from an Alaska Mountain School guide, Hashimoto contacted the Rangers and brought Feinstein over to the NPS camp.

Feinstein was diagnosed as suffering from advanced high altitude pulmonary edema. Feinstein was evacuated from the 14,200-foot camp to Talkeetna on June 20. Talkeetna Ambulance EMT's examined him. At this point Feinstein refused further treatment and, against NPS recommendations, did not attend a physician or hospital for further assessment.

### **Analysis**

As with all people climbing on Denali and Foraker, this team received a thorough briefing at Talkeetna Ranger Station from a Ranger with 30 years of climbing experience in the Alaska Range; however, they disregarded the advice about acclimatization and the way to approach a serious Alaskan climb. The suggested rate for acclimatizing is based on substantial medical research. It was totally ignored by Feinstein and his partner. It is surprising, in fact, that Hashimoto did not also appear to suffer from the effects of altitude.

The team's lack of understanding about the seriousness of Feinstein's condition led to exacerbate the condition. When the first signs and symptoms appeared, they could and should have descended and dealt with the situation themselves, following good mountaineering practice. As it was they delayed until Feinstein's condition deteriorated to a point where he was incapable of descending under his own power or even with assistance. There is little doubt that he would have died if the NPS Rangers had not been there to provide aggressive medical treatment.

Another troubling aspect of this situation was the apparent desire of Hashimoto to pass on this problem to the NPS so he could get on with his climb, regardless of the fact that he was jointly responsible for the potential death of his teammate. Perhaps this persistent desire to summit was driven by the fact that they were grant recipients, in which case Hashimoto may have felt he had a greater responsibility to their donors than to his teammate.

Climbers need to realize that the NPS is there to assist, but that does not mean one can abrogate tacit responsibilities toward teammates. (Source: Edited from a report by Daryl Miller, South District Ranger)

## **AMS AND FRACTURE**

### **Alaska, Mount McKinley, West Buttress**

In June, lead guide Bill Allen of the guiding concession Mountain Trip brought client Joanne Devenish (42) to the 14,200-foot medical camp be-