

As Morely started to ski down the snowfield, he encountered a patch of ice. His skis lost their edging and came off, causing him to fall and begin to slide out of control. Wright started to move into Morley's path, thinking that he could maybe slow him down, but decided that Morley was moving too fast and abandoned the idea. Morley slid approximately 500 feet before hitting a rocky area where he came to rest. Morley had an ice ax in his pack, but he did not have self-arrest ski poles and was not wearing a helmet. Morley stated that he had grown up skiing, having skied since he was about two or three years old.

Morely is a young and fit individual and a very competent skier. Morley had an event occur to him that happens to all skiers sometime in their careers. Unfortunately, this did not happen at a ski area but instead occurred in the backcountry. Morley slid a long distance, hitting a rocky area. The impact with rocks caused his injury. It also saved him from sliding several hundred more feet and sustaining more serious injuries or death. The snow conditions they were skiing were considered to be fairly soft, so to ski with an ice ax may have been overly cumbersome. Though it is difficult to speculate, self-arrest ski poles that are made for ski-mountaineering may have had good results.

This rescue involved using specialized personnel who are competent at ascending and descending steep ice and snow on skis. The personnel and specialized equipment used for this rescue were exposed to a variety of hazardous terrain and weather conditions during the operation. Remarkably, there were no injuries sustained during the operation. (Source: Edited from a report by Chris Harder, Ranger and Incident Commander)

FALL ON ROCK

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Garnet Canyon

On July 22 at 1445, Teton Dispatch forwarded a cellphone caller to me. John Coombs who told me that Eva Bell (22) a member of his party, had fallen and tumbled approximately 80 to 100 feet at the base of the Open Book route in Garnet Canyon. He told me that she fell on very steep ground for about 20 feet and then tumbled and cartwheeled another 60 to 80 feet on lower angle rocky terrain. He told me that she did not lose consciousness and that she was alert and oriented. He said that she had lower lumbar pain, left rib pain, an impact injury to her face and multiple abrasions and lacerations. He also said that there was a wilderness first responder on scene. Coombs had had to hike about 1.5 miles down canyon to make the cell call. I told him to return to the accident site where he could stay until help arrived, unless Bell's condition had worsened. If that were the case, he was to call me again. I had Ranger Visnovske, (park medic) take an additional medical

report from Coombs. Visnovske then contacted medical director Will Smith with the patient information.

Via Park Dispatch, the contract helicopter was requested. They gave an ETA of over one hour. Available rescue personnel were summoned to the rescue cache. Rangers Byerly and Hardesty were sent to the scene by foot given the long helicopter response time. They arrived about the same time that contract helicopter 20HX arrived at Lupine Meadows. Hardesty and Byerly assessed Bell's injuries and determined that the best method for extraction would be to use the patient evacuation suit. After a mission briefing, Rangers Jackson, Visnovske, and Motter were flown to a staging site at the Garnet Meadows. Jackson spotted as the evacuation suit was delivered via short-haul to the accident site. Bell was then extracted unattended and flown to the Garnet Meadows landing zone where she was loaded internally in the helicopter and flown to Lupine Meadows. She was transported to St. John's Hospital in Medic 1. All rescue personnel were flown back to Lupine Meadows from the Garnet Canyon Meadows.

Analysis

In an interview at St. John's Hospital, Bell and her companions told me that they were soloing the 4th class terrain just below the Open Book climb. Bell's friends told me that she became uncomfortable with the climbing and was about to pass her backpack up to a companion when she slipped and fell. She was not yet wearing a climbing helmet or climbing shoes. Coombs told me that he felt the fact that Bell had her pack on when she fell saved her from further trauma. (Source: Scott Guenther, Ranger and Incident Commander)

HAND-HOLDS BROKE OFF—FALL ON ROCK

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Direct Jensen Ridge

On August 5 about 1430, Exum Guide Mark Newcomb (39) fell about 80 feet when his hand-holds broke off while ascending the Direct Jensen Ridge route of Symmetry Spire. He was about two pitches from the top of the technical portion of the route. He was guiding two clients, and one of them was belaying him, arresting his fall despite suffering a significant wound to his right forearm from a falling rock. Newcomb suffered multiple trauma, including lacerations, bruises, and abrasions. The Exum Mountaineering Guides office was immediately notified of the accident via cellphone.

Rescue Coordinator G. Montopoli was contacted by the Exum Mountaineering Guides office, and after speaking with a client and Newcomb, immediately initiated a rescue operation. The contract helicopter was summoned to Lupine Meadows and St. John's Hospital Emergency Room was advised of the situation.