

flown to the Lupine Meadows Rescue Cache. Park Medical Advisor Dr. Will Smith provided advanced medical interventions. Haymaker was then transported to the Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center via their emergency helicopter. Haymaker's climbing partner, Andy Friedlund (21), was flown in helicopter to Lupine Meadows from the accident scene with the remaining three rangers.

Analysis

Ryan Haymaker had very little, if any, mountaineering experience. He was originally part of a group of four people who obtained the overnight permit for Garnet Canyon. They split into two parties in the canyon on their approach day. The following day, one party headed for the South Teton, and the other party (R. Haymaker and A. Friedlund) headed for Middle Teton. Because Haymaker and Friedlund headed up the wrong couloir, there is a good chance that they did not receive any information about the route at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station prior to the ascent. Those without prior knowledge often mistake the Ellingwood Couloir for the Southwest Couloir. It is a very steep couloir approaching 50 degrees near its top and has a slant to it so that people who fall often crash into exposed rocks on its west side and middle. A sliding fall in the couloir without wearing helmet can be disastrous, as was the case with Haymaker. Furthermore, few experienced climbers would consider glissading this couloir wearing crampons. Most down-climb the couloir, and some even rappel it, creating anchors in the snow or on the rock walls on its sides. (Source: Ranger George Montopoli – Incident Commander)

FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING ALONE, INEXPERIENCE

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Grand Teton

On Saturday July 31, Don Ivie (44) arrived in Jackson with his wife Yvette from Springfield, Missouri. That afternoon, Ivie visited the Jenny Lake Ranger Station to inquire about route conditions and any other route information he could gather. During his contact with Ranger Schuster, he mentioned that he was going to start his climb at about 4:00 a.m. the following morning. Schuster advised him that it would probably be better for him to leave sometime around 1:00 a.m. in order to avoid potential afternoon storms. Schuster also advised Ivie that he would need an ice ax in order to get up and down from the Lower Saddle.

Later in the day, Ivie had a conversation with Ken Jern about climbing the Grand Teton the following day. Jern, a former Exum Mountain Guide with many years of experience climbing the Grand Teton, advised Ivie to take his time and, since Ivie was going to be in the area for nine days, become acclimatized to the elevation while attempting a smaller objective. Jern also suggested that Ivie should consider hiring a guide to take him up the Grand Teton. It appeared to Jern that Ivie was very determined that he was going to climb the Grand Teton early in the trip.

At 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, Ivie was left at the Lupine Meadows Trailhead by his wife Yvette as he set out for his climb. He was equipped with: a brown Camelback pack, a headlamp, a rented ice ax and crampons, a set of trekking poles, a climbing harness, some food bars, his cellular phone, a lightweight jacket, and a can of Red Bull. Yvette would not hear from Ivie until he text messaged her at about 9:40 a.m. from somewhere just above the Lower Saddle, stating that he was running a little later than planned so she should bump his pickup time back from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. In the message, Ivie also included a photo of a Red Bull can resting on an area of black rock.

Sometime around 12:00 p.m., an Exum guide and his party were descending the Owen-Spalding route below the main rappel when they saw a lone man fitting Ivie's description resting on a rock. During the guide's brief interaction with him, the guide learned he was heading toward the Owen-Spalding climb for a solo ascent. The guide also noticed that he was wearing dark colored or brown lightweight hiking boots that looked to be of some unknown brand and seemed inappropriate for climbing the Grand Teton.

About 3:00 p.m., another climbing party noted that there was a brown Camelback lying near their packs close to the bottom of the main Owen-Spalding rappel. The pack looked like it was laid there with the intention of returning to it. This climbing party did not see any other individuals along the upper Owen-Spalding route from the summit other than the guided Exum party.

At 8:55 p.m. on July 31, I was contacted by Yvette Ivie concerning the whereabouts of her husband, Don, who was overdue from his climb

Analysis

We know that Don Ivie fell from somewhere along the beginning of the Owen-Spalding route on Sunday, July 31st after 12:00 p.m. Because this was an un-witnessed event, we may never know what exactly happened to cause his fall. However, there are a few factors that do seem to lead one to focus on his lack of overall ability to accomplish the task he set out upon.

Don Ivie was not an experienced mountaineer, nor did he possess any technical climbing experience that would have aided in both his climbing technique and route finding abilities. Prior to this trip, he had climbed once or twice at an indoor climbing gym on a route that he felt was equivalent to the difficulty he would encounter on the Grand Teton. While the Owen-Spalding route is rated fairly low on the difficulty scale, it is very exposed and, at certain points, awkward climbing especially for a beginner climber. The route finding is not straightforward and, for an inexperienced climber, complex. It is not unusual for climbers to get off-route and find themselves in an area far more difficult than their level of ability. Ivie's climbing experience and technique would have made the climb much more difficult than its rating suggests.

Another scenario that many beginner climbers do not take into account involves backing off or down-climbing a route. Though descending along the Crawl or Belly Roll may not be too much more difficult than ascending it, descending the Double Chimney, either from the top, or part way through the climb, would be very awkward and difficult. Though it's considered a relatively easy route, a mistake made along any portion of this climb while unroped will have dire consequences. It should also be noted that this route rarely sees solo ascents from climbers who have not already climbed it roped.

To climb the Grand Teton in one day is an undertaking not to be taken lightly. It is typically only accomplished by very fit individuals who are acclimatized and know the route well. At altitudes greater than 10,000 feet, rational decisions can be more difficult to make. Ivie lived at an altitude of about 1,300 feet. He had arrived in the Jackson Hole area less than 24 hours prior to the start of his climb.

Ivie's footwear was not adequate for a climb of this nature, nor was it designed for climbing on rock. With this type of hiking boot, a slip on the rock would not be uncommon and would make vertical climbing much more challenging.

Though the Owen-Spalding route was free of snow, recent rain storms had passed through the area so, since this part of the climb is not in the sun until late in the day, it is not unusual for small patches of ice, Vergas or black ice to develop in shady portions of the climb. Slipping on ice anywhere along the route would also contribute to a fall.

The most likely factors to contribute to this tragic outcome were the combination of poor judgment and inexperience compounded by the lack of appropriate equipment to safely ascend this route. Ivie's strong desire to have a successful attempt on the Grand Teton early in his trip appears to have swayed his sense of reasoning and pushed him well beyond his abilities. This was not simply a case of someone attempting a climb unseen and unknown. It is apparent that Ivie decided to ignore the advice he was given from a variety of experienced people.

All this having been said, we express our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and co-workers of this fallen adventurer. (Source: Ranger Chris Harder – Incident Commander)

LOOSE BLOCK PULLED OFF – FALL ON ROCK

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Middle Teton

On August 9, a party of three was intending to climb the Buckingham Ridge on the Middle Teton. They were ascending the fourth-class approach slabs, unroped, when Steven Zalesky (43) pulled a large loose block off and fell about ten feet to a ledge and then tumbled an additional 60 feet. Zaleski's partners, M. Sohasky and D. Hemken, were out of sight of Zalesky when they heard rockfall. They shouted to Zalesky to see if he was injured, and Zalesky responded that he was "alive, but hurt".