

DAVID DUANE PAISLEY

1961-2000

Colorado Springs-based professional guide and mountaineer David Paisley died May 31 as the result of a crevasse fall while descending Mt. Bona in Alaska after a successful ascent.

An all-around alpinist, Dave was a nonspecialist mountaineer who enjoyed all aspects of the outdoor environment, from technical rock climbing to waterfall ice to peakbagging in the Cordillera Blanca, on Mexico volcanos, and in recent years peaks in the St. Elias Range.

He began his involvement with the mountains in the late 1970s and early '80s, wetting his interest in cold weather mountain pursuits through winter climbing and backpacking trips in New York's Adirondack mountains. Dave's involvement with the outdoor pursuits department at Ohio State University provided a catalyst for the transition to technical rock climbing, where he learned and plied his cragging skills at nearby Clifton Gorge, Ohio, and Seneca Rocks, West Virginia.

Beginning in 1980, Dave started working summers in the Sangre de Cristo mountains of northeastern New Mexico for the Boy Scouts of America at Philmont Scout Ranch and Explorer Base. At Philmont, Dave used every opportunity to explore and climb the mountains of New Mexico and Colorado with other like-minded staff members.

At the end of every Philmont season, Dave had several free weeks before returning to classes at OSU, and these periods were singularly devoted to his quest of climbing all 54 14ers in Colorado. Thus began an intimate, all-season relationship with the mountains of Colorado which lasted the remainder of his life. After finishing college in Columbus, Dave moved to Colorado Springs, in 1985 (with Patience Wickersham, who would become Patience Paisley the following year). Though he traveled to the greater ranges of the world over the years, the mountains of Colorado remained both his spiritual and geographic home.

Over the 15 years that the Front Range served as a home base, Dave and Patience remained extremely active in their outdoor pursuits, and dedicated climbing partners.

A signature Paisley trait was Dave's exacting organizational skills: he was meticulous and methodical in his preparation for every trip, whether an extended weekend outing to the San Juans or an expedition to Mt. Logan. And, by extension, he was a strong practitioner of risk-management. As a climber, he was conservative, and invested strongly in the idea that safety and sound judgement were as much a part of the repertoire and toolkit of a climber as any piece of hardware.

Dave's gear room stands as a monument to the unfortunate irony of the never sufficiently examined rhetoric that "he who dies with the most toys wins." Part climbing museum, part utilitarian storage, a spare bedroom in the Paisley household served as the storage vault for all their outdoor equipment. It held 15 pairs of skis, ten sleeping bags, a full wall closet of outdoor-wear for all seasons and activities, two walls covered with ice tools, shelves loaded with 15 working ropes, two dozen packs, a pile of accessories, cook kits, six tents, and hanging racks of climbing hardware. All of it was labeled, all logged and inventoried and, most notably, all used extensively.

His first REI ice axe—used until all the paint had worn off the shaft—hangs as a matter-of-fact symbolic piece among the multiple sets of ice tools. Strangely, though he did own a chalk bag, Dave was something of the anachronism in that regard: he refrained from using chalk on technical rock climbs.

In the course of his 38 years, Dave managed to come extremely close to his conception of a perfect life. He was out on every weekend, regardless of the weather, doing anything from telemark skiing to waterfall ice climbing to mountainbiking, and spent every available vacation bagging peaks. More often than not his partner was his wife, Patience; their marriage was simpatico, in that there wasn't ever room for argument about "...too much time out climbing." If anything, there was never

enough time; the Paisleys were disappointed when they got less than their 52 weekends per year away from home. A "good year" meant more than 150 days in the outdoors.

Dave will be remembered by all who knew him, worked with him, or climbed with him, as a soft-spoken, humble, and friendly mountaineer who never lost an ounce of motivation, kept the volume on "11" when playing heavy metal (which was when he wasn't sleeping), and was always making plans for the next trip or projects.

PATIENCE PAISLEY, GEORGE RODWAY, and JAMES VIVIAN

SETH SHAW

1962-2000

Seth Thomas "ST" Shaw and Tim Wagner had successfully climbed a new route on the east face/southeast couloir of Mt. Johnson in the Ruth Gorge of the Alaska Range when, on an overcast rest day, the two set out for a bit of ice bouldering. Upon entering the crevasse, the ice shifted and an immense amount of ice buried Seth Shaw. Having completed a climb of his dreams, Seth lost his life "passing time with a little workout."

Seth was known to those that met him as one of the kindest and humblest fellows about. He was always keen to help others out, be it with his profession as a snow forecaster or with a helpful tip for a tricky move on a climb. His motivation for climbing was quite simple: it was fun. "Hee haw," he would often chuckle as he tied in.

He climbed for the joy of it, not for what others might see of this frivolous pursuit in him. One would have to pry tales of the varied types of climbs that Seth excelled at. No discipline was out of Seth's practice or enjoyment.

The son of Tom and Anne Shaw, Seth grew up in Southern California with training in gymnastics and wrestling, two sports that suited his body type and would parlay well in his true calling of climbing. Drawn to the mountains of Utah, Seth attended the University of Utah and received a degree in Meteorology, which he applied as a forecaster for the Wasatch Avalanche Forecast Center. Each winter, backcountry enthusiasts were greeted by Seth's adroit observations on the local weather and snow conditions. His colleagues were happy to have him part of the team.

Be it ticking the steep sport routes in the Hell Cave of American Fork or soloing the major ice climbs of Provo in a day, Seth was a player in the strong community of Utah climbers. The quest for unclimbed ground provided Seth with many an adventure on the sandstone haunts of the southwest. Combining these skills with a penchant for cold and snow, Seth went on to the Greater Ranges. Two routes in the Kichatnas, a new route on the northwest face of Mt. Hunter and a new route on the north face of the Moose's Tooth are testament to his determination in the Alaska Range. In 1998, Seth ventured to Shipton Spire in the Karakoram and enjoyed a fine ascent. These and other desperate climbs Seth would summarize in his unique drawl as "not so bad." He was understated in much of what he did, especially climbing, which left those of us who knew his skills wondering how hard his routes really were.

Perhaps Seth will leave a mark in the gastronomy circles with his broccoli peanut butter burritos and on the fashion scene with the shorts and polypro combo. These quirks are a reflection of his dedication to climbing. If something wasn't directly essential for climbing, it didn't justify an expenditure.

Yes, Seth, we loved your sense of humor and childlike goofiness, but damn, we'll miss you. You were always motivated, and you were stronger than all of us.

CONRAD ANKER