

*Analysis:* deMonterey had sprained his left ankle about 4 weeks previously and the night before the climb had not slept well. These factors added to the 180 mile drive prior to the climb could have led to the result. deMonterey believes that he should have heeded his vague inner promptings not to climb or at least not to have led that day.

*New York, Shawangunks.* On 18 May deVries was leading on an overhang known as Shackley's Ceiling near top of the cliffs. He was clipped into a piton just under the overhang by means of a sling and two carabiners. Neave was belaying deVries from a point somewhat below and 30-40 feet out to the side. Neave was tied into two pitons at about 90° to each other and about 6-8 feet from the stance position. Body belay (waist) was being used. deVries failed to negotiate the overhang and when his arms became tired he peeled off. The fall would have been only 8-10 feet if the sling had held. However, the knot in the sling pulled out and deVries fell 40-50 feet until held by Neave, deVries climbed back up to the belay position and the climb was completed (Neave leading) by bypassing the overhang.

*Source:* Roger Neave.

*Analysis:* If deVries had attempted to descend before his arms became too tired, the fall might have been avoided, although from the position reached it would not have been easy to make the return move. The length of the fall was greatly increased by an inadequately tied knot in the belay sling, which was woven nylon.

*North Carolina, Durham.* On 23 November a party of climbers from the University of North Carolina were practicing rock climbing technique at an abandoned rock quarry about one mile south of Durham. George Huppert (20) and Joseph McSwain started to climb an obvious crack up an inside corner using direct aid. Huppert, who was leading, had placed one piton and was placing another between the corner and the main cliff. The piton sounded good for the first two blows, but on the third, the piton went into the eye unexpectedly, acted as a wedge, and pried a huge block (which had been the inside corner) from the main cliff. All pitons came out, and both Huppert and the block tumbled fifteen feet to the ground. He was crushed when the block hit him.

Several of the other members notified the Durham County Rescue Squad, while others tried to relieve the pressure of the rock against Huppert. The members of the Rescue Squad estimated the weight of the block to be around 3,000 pounds.

Huppert was rushed to Watts Hospital in Durham. The doctors said that he suffered a dislocated pelvis, a fractured hip, and a severe laceration of the coccyx. He is now making a complete recovery.

*Source:* George E. DeWolfe.

*Analysis:* Huppert is an experienced climber and was using every safety precaution one can employ on a direct aid ascent. No procedures were violated. I think that a hard hat could have prevented any damage done to Huppert's head, although there was next to none. It was a freak accident that could have happened to any of us, and I feel sure that Huppert feels lucky to be alive.