

*Analysis:* Foster stated that had he realized his fatigued state, he could have held onto the pin above him, preventing the fall. Schaffer feels that the wearing of gloves, while belaying, would have made the unexpected fall a routinely stopped incident. In the opinion of this investigator, this accident points out the increasing tendency of young climbers to try to fly before their wings are dry. The ability to judge one's own state of fatigue, and the importance of a belayer's constant preparedness, are basic to even beginning climbing. Grade IV (a full day or one-and-a-half) 5.9 climbs are not designed for the intermediate, weekend climber. Experienced climbers hearing of the accident asked this question, "Has Schaffer ever had belay practice?"

*California, Yosemite National Park, Arrowhead Spire.* On 12 November, David A. Brewer (20) and Pat Noonan (19) signed out at Park Headquarters at 8:30 a.m. to climb Arrowhead Spire. Ascending the approach route to the base of the spire they got slightly off route. In a steep scree shoot at the base of the spire Noonan dislodged a rock about seven inches in diameter which struck Brewer on the back of the head. Brewer blacked out momentarily, but did not lose consciousness. Fortunately, Brewer was just a few feet below Noonan and the rock had not enough distance to get momentum. Brewer was able to descend the second and third class route with a belay from Noonan and went to the hospital. Brewer suffered a slight laceration and concussion.

*Source:* Rick T. Anderson, Park Ranger, Yosemite National Park.

*Analysis:* This accident could have been prevented had the boys used proper techniques in ascending the scree slope, and a hard hat would have prevented any injury.

*California, Sierra Nevada, University Peak.* On 29 May, Peter Young (30) and four companions had successfully climbed University Peak (13,632) and were descending the North side of the Northwest ridge. At about the 11,500 foot level, deep soft snow was encountered. In order to avoid the snow, the group was traversing a snow-free scree slope when Peter Young apparently lost his balance. He attempted to regain control by taking a step down the slope, but the condition worsened and a wild, tumbling fall ensued. During the course of the fall he attempted to arrest the fall by grabbing a 3 foot diameter flake, but the rock pulled out. Young finally came to a stop face down in the snow field approximately 50 feet below the starting point of the fall and immediately rolled over on his back. The rest of the group was slow in getting to Peter because of the extreme looseness of the material on the slope which was angled about 50° from horizontal. However, treatment for shock and multiple abrasions about face and neck was begun within five minutes. Young was conscious, but very disoriented at first. He complained of severe pain in his upper left arm, but no broken bones could be found so the arm was merely immobilized with an elastic bandage. Peter was able to walk with help and the party arrived at camp about 7:30 p.m. where further treatment was administered. He was evacuated the following day; partly by horse, and partly under his own power. Subsequent medical examination revealed no injuries other than those already treated.