

The anchor point could not be determined. No carabiner or pin was on this doubled rope. The brake system consisted of a figure-eight seat clipped in front of his swami belt. Attached to that carabiner was a second. On the second brake bar there was a quarter-inch angle piton. Although some would look twice at this arrangement it did not fail. The anchor did.

*California, Yosemite National Park, Indian Caves Area.* On 25 March Jon Martin Spangler (18) and five companions were bouldering at Indian Caves. Spangler lost his grip and traction, slid 6 to 8 feet down an angle of rock, bounced and flipped around, then fell free for 20 to 25 feet and landed on a smaller boulder feet first. He suffered a broken right foot, broken pelvis, and broken back. He was transferred to a stretcher and then to the hospital.

*Source:* Thomas C. Wylie, YNP Ranger.

*Analysis:* Being a novice he should have used more caution in bouldering.

*California, Yosemite National Park, Lost Arrow Direct.* On 6 April Roy Naasz (20) and Andrew Embick (19) were climbing the Lost Arrow. Naasz was leading the last pitch of the South Face. He later described the nailing as very difficult and his third pin as A4. The crack was unusual for Yosemite. It was built as if one had inserted a bottle-shape into the granite and run it vertically up the cliff. A pin enters the narrow portion, then passes through a void before it touches bottom. The granite was weathered and friable in the crack. The third pin, a two-inch bong appeared to seat fairly well, but when Naasz put his weight on it, it rotated out of the crack. He fell about 25 feet, zippering the remaining pins to the bolt at Second Terror. He struck the ledge at Second Terror and broke his femur. His companion Embick, after securing Naasz, went for help. Rescue party returned to Naasz for night bivouac. Rescue accomplished the next day.

*Source:* Peter Thompson, YNP Ranger, Kimbrick, and Naasz.

*Analysis:* A3 or A4 nailing in a rotten crack on a Grade VI route is difficult for anyone.

*California, Yosemite National Park, South Face Washington Column.* On 25 April William Chadwick (23) and William R. Smith (20) were climbing the above route. Chadwick led the pitch to Dinner Ledge. Smith had belayed Chadwick from a large (6x8 foot) ledge. Chadwick believed that at the time of the accident Smith should have been preparing the hauling sack for its ascent and that he was about to Jumar the pitch, clean it, and bring the day pack. Chadwick recalled that the Jumar rope went taut, then suddenly slack. There was a muffled scream and then nothing. A party one pitch ahead on the route descended with Chadwick to the bottom where the body was found. Two climbers on the road at the time of the accident saw the day pack and Smith fall simultaneously. A Jumar was found on the body, attached by sling to the swami, and a second was found on the Jumar rope about 8 feet above the belay ledge.

*Source:* Pete Thompson, YNP Ranger, and Chadwick.

*Analysis:* The Jumars, rope and slings all appeared in good condition. There was no apparent equipment failure. The Jumarring angle was vertical, so no adverse stresses were placed on the Jumars. Had Smith been tied to the end of the Jumar rope, or belayed from above, the accident would have been prevented.

It can only be surmised what happened: A.) that Smith simply lost his balance on the large ledge and fell; B.) that he climbed on a loose Jumar thinking it the one tied to his waist, leaned over to pick up the day pack and fell; C.) that he had both Jumars attached to his waist, and clipped one in. If the knot in the sling on the Jumar failed or was improperly tied, or the sling failed, he would have fallen when he put weight on it. (No sling was found at the bottom of the wall, but a good loop of sling remained on the Jumars on the rope.)

*California, Yosemite National Park, The Iota.* On 7 May Jeff Keyser (20) and Thomas Stutzman (20) were climbing the Iota. Keyser led the first pitch, 5.5 plus; Stutzman led the second pitch and was almost at the end, approximately 135 feet up. He slipped and fell about 270 feet. All of Stutzman's pins were pulled out. Keyser was jerked out of his belay seat, but the belay held. Keyser came down on one rope. Stutzman had been knocked unconscious but soon regained consciousness. According to Keyser the pins had not sounded firm as they were driven. Stutzman suffered a basilar skull fracture, and a fractured lumbar vertebra plus numerous lacerations. Evacuation to hospital was done by the Park Rangers.

*Source:* Keyser and Pete Thompson, YNP Ranger.

*Analysis:* It is a wonder that Stutzman survived a 270-foot fall. This probably indicates that he was slowed or momentarily stopped by some if not all of the pins. The crack system they were climbing was just west of the Iota and was dirty and rotten. They probably should not have been attempting this type of climb with their limited experience.

*California, Yosemite National Park, West Buttress, El Capitan.* On 17 October Mike Caldwell (20) and Don Fredrickson (27) started up the above route. Short days slowed their progress, but after three consecutive hammock bivouacs they had surmounted all of the major technical difficulties of the route except for the A4 traverse above the Grand Traverse. They awoke on the 20th in high spirits. Caldwell led half the A4 traverse hoping to beat the rain but was unable to do so. Fredrickson cleaned the pitch. By the time he reached Caldwell on a small ledge both were soaked to the skin. Caldwell placed a bolt and rappelled to a small terrace below the Grand Traverse. Fredrickson followed and they spent the rest of the day shivering in the cold while they attempted to dry their wet gear. Their support party warned them of a coming storm. Their position had too much overhang to descend by rappel, and they were too chilled to sit out a storm so they requested a rescue. Fredrickson also seemed to have an injury to his eye. The rescue operation was a bit tricky due to the distance (1,750 feet) required to affect the rescue. Half of this was vertical and required direct-aid techniques. Two