

Washington, Stuart Range, Mt. Stuart. On 16 October there were three separate climbing teams consisting of two climbers per team on the same route. A massive rock fall came off the ridge all funneling into the chute that the climbers were in. The rocks were airborne as they passed over the lead team and hit in the area of Mark Weigelt (22) and Earl Hamilton (29). They heard it coming. Weigelt caught the full force of the fall. Hamilton put his pack on the slope and jambed his ice-axe in behind it for support and got behind the pack. The rock hit his pack with such force it broke the pack in three pieces and shattered his ice-axe. It is surmised that the force of the pack against his head gave him the compression fracture he suffered. He also sustained some rib and hip injury and a broken finger. He was rendered unconscious and remained so for a couple of hours. Neither climber was wearing a hard hat. An ice screw that had been placed prior to the rock fall held and kept the climbers from sliding 600 feet to the glacier below. The other climbers reached Weigelt. They listened to his chest for heartbeat and checked for breathing but detected neither. Hamilton was lowered some 600 feet to the glacier by the climbers and was not told of the fate of his companion. The climbers cared for him through the night and helped load him in the chopper in the morning.

The MAST crew could see Weigelt in the snow chute and were told by Dunham that he was deceased. They lifted out Hamilton. Were it not for the other climbers on the same route at the time, Hamilton most likely would not have survived. The small party of climbers did a fine job in the rescue effort of Earl Hamilton. The M.R.C. forces had all the right gear with them to make the job rather easy. Probably the hardest job was for the personnel belaying and the one helping them pull five lengths of 160-foot ropes up the slope. The chainsaw motor and winch never skipped a beat and was not difficult to start at that elevation. They did notice that the 5/32-inch cable twisted more as it came off the capstan than the 3/16-inch cable does.

The teams from Ellensburg, Yakima, Wenatchee and Tacoma worked extremely well together.

The operation over fairly difficult terrain was a simple straight-forward operation — a 600-foot-plus lift up 40 to 50 degree snow slope. There was danger of rock fall in the chute for the two who went down to do the loading. They descended and ascended on either side of the chute.

Source: John Simac and Hal Foss.

Washington Cascades, Mt. Index. On 21 August Craig Keyes (27) was climbing a difficult route on Mt. Index alone. He lost his grip on a 40-foot, near-vertical wall, fell about 20 feet and tumbled another 20 feet and landed on a ledge. Other climbers accidentally discovered him three days later. His injuries prevented his moving and he was very dehydrated when located.

Source: Hal Foss.

Analysis: He should not have been climbing alone and no one knew of his location or plans.

Washington, Snoqualmie Pass area, Alta Mt. On 21 May a party of eleven led by Fred Wright left their cars at 0630 and hiked north, on the east side of Gold Creek, for about 2 hours, then headed up Rampart Ridge

arriving at the scene of the accident (about 4,800 feet elevation) about 0940. They had just taken a break and were getting ready to continue the climb when four or five rocks started rolling down the slope toward them. They yelled "rock", and began to take evasive action, but Rebecca Rosenbaum (19) was hit on her left thigh by a large boulder which knocked her down. She began screaming and sliding down the slope and was stopped by one of the party who called out that she had a severe leg injury.

Wright got to her within five or ten seconds as did Bill Thayer and they immediately realized she had a compound fracture with a severe open wound (about 6-8 inches long). After they ascertained the degree of the injury, Wright directed two of the party — Bob Hammond, the strongest climber, and another, to head out fast to the cars and then to the Summit to report the accident to the Forest Service and to start rescue operations.

They applied compresses, heavy bandages and then used two ice-axes to splint the leg securely. They added heavy clothing, gave her two codeine tablets for the severe pain, and began the slow process of moving her off the snow slope to the protection of the wooded area which was about 400 feet below. They set up boot-axe belays and three of them slid the girl down using their bodies or arms as skids.

Bob Hammond made excellent time, arriving at the Summit at approximately 1145. He phoned the King County Sheriff who contacted the Kittitas County Sheriff who immediately called Bob back at the Summit. Bob advised the details of the accident and terrain and insisted the only safe evacuation would be by chopper. The Sheriff agreed and kept in touch with Bob as to his progress about every 15 minutes.

About 1340 the Army chopper rescue unit arrived at the Summit in an area set aside by the State Police and County Sheriff, picked Bob up and he directed it to the area.

Meanwhile they had set up a rough shelter, built a fire, kept the patient warm and fed her some warm broth and some warm sweet tea. They checked the bandage regularly for bleeding, and her legs for circulation, cutting the laces of her boots and gaiters as necessary.

They also had sent out a second party of two to mark the trail with streamers in case a land rescue was necessary.

With the cloud layer only a few hundred feet above them, they were very concerned about the possibility of a chopper rescue, so when they heard the sound of its engine coming down the valley, they were very relieved. The slope was too steep for it to land so the chopper lowered the Stokes stretcher which they unhooked. It was no problem to move the girl carefully into the basket, cover her and strap her in securely and return to the clearing in a matter of a few minutes.

The chopper returned when they saw all was ready and with very professional know-how lifted her at just the right time into the cabin.

Because of a previous emergency, they were directed to a doctor standing by in Ole Elum and after he attended to her, the chopper took the patient to Harborview Medical Center.

Source: Fred M. Wright and Hal Foss.

Analysis: The best thing that happened all day was the arrival of the chopper — but the second best was the information that Bob Hammond gave us later on. He said both the chopper para-medic and the doctor remarked about the fine job we had done in handling the victim, bandaging the wound, the splints and the evacuation. Without the full co-

operation of all units as well as the excellent support of each of the climbers in our party, we could not have succeeded.

(This is a good example of a well-organized rescue and demonstrates what a well-trained and experienced group can accomplish. ed)

TABLE I

Reported Mountaineering Accidents

Year	Number of Accidents Reported USA-CAN.	Total Number of Persons Involved USA-CAN.	Injured USA-CAN.	Killed USA-CAN.
1951	15	22	11	3
1952	31	35	17	13
1953	24	27	12	12
1954	31	41	31	8
1955	34	39	28	6
1956	46	72	54	13
1957	45	53	28	18
1958	32	39	23	11
1959	42 — 2	56 — 2	31 — 0	19 — 2
1960	47 — 4	64 — 12	37 — 8	19 — 4
1961	49 — 9	61 — 14	45 — 10	14 — 4
1962	71 — 1	90 — 1	64 — 0	19 — 1
1963	68 — 11	79 — 12	47 — 10	19 — 2
1964	53 — 11	65 — 16	44 — 10	14 — 3
1965	72 — 0	90 — 0	59 — 0	21 — 0
1966	67 — 7	80 — 9	52 — 6	16 — 3
1967	74 — 10	110 — 14	63 — 7	33 — 5
1968	70 — 13	87 — 19	43 — 12	27 — 5
1969	94 — 11	125 — 17	66 — 9	31 — 2
1970	129 — 11	174 — 11	88 — 5	16 — 5
1971	110 — 17	138 — 29	76 — 12	35 — 7
1972	140 — 28	172 — 40	98 — 17	49 — 12
Totals	1,344 — 135	1,719 — 196	1,017 — 106	416 — 55