

mediately and continued. Meanwhile Loehr had requested a MAST helicopter to land at Paradise and pick up a Ranger, then head to the accident site.

The helicopter was due into Paradise at 4:30 p.m. About 4:40 p.m. MAST called and said that they did a fly-by and found the injured party and landed and were on their way to the hospital. The MAST medics performed CPR all the way to the hospital, arriving at 5 p.m. Wilkens was pronounced DOA due to extensive head and chest injuries. Hasfjord, Neilsen and Lepeska spent the rest of the night at their base camp and came out to Longmire on Thursday, February 17, at 6 p.m. (Source: John Loehr, Mt. Rainier Park.)

*Analysis:* Wilkens was a reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligence*. His primary objective was to cover a first winter ascent of Mount Rainier. Party leader Hasfjord said that Wilkens started to run and work out two weeks before the climb. Hasfjord stated that he had reservations about letting Wilkens go above their high camp, but Wilkens prevailed on him and Hasfjord let him start the climb. Wilkens ran out of gas at 11,700 feet and waited for them there, not wanting to destroy the climb.

It is obvious that Wilkens didn't use good judgment in starting his glissade without looking to see where he might end up. His glissade position was unusual and his hands were positioned wrong on his ice axe for self-arresting. It is unknown why he didn't attempt to self-arrest. Possibly if the first climber that noticed the icy section had yelled back up to be careful of that section, or if Lepeska had cautioned him when he first laid down on his pack, Wilkens might not have started the glissade. (Source: John Loehr, Mt. Rainier Park.)

**BELAY FAILURE—***Washington, The Tooth.* Jack Bartleson (46) was injured while climbing on the southwest corner of The Tooth on April 24.

The accident occurred as Bartleson was being belayed by Don Brooks while a second rope team consisting of Jim Llewellyn and Bob Tillotson was climbing directly above them. Tillotson was leading only a few feet above Llewellyn, when he fell on a steep section. Llewellyn was belaying with carabiners chained to his anchor which, when force was applied, corkscrewed around, forcing a gate open and causing failure of the belay. Both Tillotson and Llewellyn fell toward Bartleson, with their rope becoming wrapped around Bartleson's leg pulling him off. All three fell together, finally being stopped by Brooks' belay.

Both Tillotson and Llewellyn were uninjured, while Bartleson suffered injuries of the upper leg. Bartleson was helped down below (east) Pineapple Pass where they established camp and party members went for help. MRC arrived at Alpentel at midnight of the 24th and were at the victim's side at 1:15 a.m. on April 25. A night evacuation was started at 2:45 a.m., using route preparation teams, litter handling teams and lowering teams; with the aid of moonlight and headlamps, the evacuation was complete by 4 a.m.

*Analysis:* No further information available. One can assume that Llewellyn became unclipped from his anchor point, but as to how Brooks managed to belay all three is unknown. Given the nature of the mishap, there is a lesson to be gleaned from it—somewhere. (Source: J. Williamson.)

*FALLING WHILE DESCENDING, UNROPED—Washington, The Tooth.* David Putnam (19) fell while descending “The Tooth.” He was with Steven White (19) and Gary High (18) when he fell 100 feet down a steep snow and rock slope, coming to rest against a tree. He was seriously injured, and was air evacuated by a MAST helicopter. (Source: Rodney McDowell, King County Police.)

*Analysis:* Risk increases when (1) climbing unroped, especially while (2) descending. (Source: J. Williamson.)

*FALLING ROCK—Washington, Mt. Rainier.* On June 18, a fifteen-year-old boy was injured by rockfall while climbing in the Thumb Rock area of the Liberty Ridge route with five others. His kneecap was broken, so a rescue team of eight had to lower him 1000 feet before an air evacuation was possible. (Source: Dave Sicks, Mountain Rescue Council.)

*LOSS OF CONTROL IN A VOLUNTARY GLISSADE—Washington, Emmans Glacier.* Dean Klapper (33) was killed in a fall from the 13,000-foot level of the Emmans Glacier while climbing with four friends. (Source: *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, “July 8, 1977.”)

*LOSS OF CONTROL, INVOLUNTARY GLISSADE—Washington, Big Four Mountain.* I was the leader on the July 9 climb which included six other climbers, three of whom were experienced and three of whom were basic students in the 1977 Everett Basic Climbing course. Dave Moffat (50) was one of the experienced, having climbed for many years.

At no time prior to the accident were there any indications that any of the party were either mentally or physically tired. At the time of the accident, the visibility was approximately 100 feet, with the temperature in the 50° range.

The party had been on the upper snow slope of Big Four which has an approximate angle of 30° when the accident happened. It was about 2 p.m. and the elevation was approximately 5800 feet. The party had been descending on the snow for about five minutes when Dave slipped onto his buttocks. I noticed that he stuck the spike of his ice axe into the snow (as if he were glissading) before he rolled over to attempt an ice axe arrest. His attempts at arrest appeared futile; he lost his axe, and he tumbled from my sight into the mist.