

to his waist became snarled in a tree and absorbed most of the fall. When Cubillo struck the ground, he was knocked unconscious for a few minutes. Evacuation was made by NPS personnel. Cubillo suffered no major injuries. (Source: Hal Grovert, SAR Officer, Yosemite National Park)

Analysis

Cubillo's harness (Whillans model) was approximately 2½ years old. No other signs of wear show in the harness. Cubillo was only tied into one point on the harness. As it was one of the original harnesses, it did not have the waist tie-ins that the newer harnesses have. Continual check of harness stitching is necessary for safety. Also, if harnesses were stitched with a different color of thread than the webbing, it would be easier to tell wear in stitching. (Source: Hal Grovert, SAR Officer, Yosemite National Park)

FALL ON ICE

California, Mt. San Jacinto

At 8 a.m. on April 28, 1979, a party of 13 left the parking area at the base of Snow Creek and climbed to the bivouac site, about the 7,400-foot level. The camp was reached by all at 5 p.m. We camped comfortably and spirits were high.

Ice conditions were excellent during the cold of the night, so we left camp at 4:30 a.m. on April 29 so as to reach the summit before the sun rose too high and softened the ice. Members used headlamps until 5:50 a.m., when it became light enough to climb without them.

At 6 a.m. Guenther Zaeschmar (57), the last member of the party, had trouble with his left crampon and attempted to remedy the problem. He set his ice axe to his right side and let go of it to free his hands for work on the crampon straps. As he leaned left, with his pack still on (about 10 kg.), he lost his balance. He attempted to arrest himself by setting his right foot but the crampon came off under the force. He then fell approximately 2,000 feet down Snow Creek. Ed Connor, a nearby teammate, witnessed these events and called for help from the remaining party above.

Two party members, Dan Curly and Dale McCauley, climbed down toward the victim while the remaining party continued to the nearby summit and Ranger Station.

The Ranger Station was reached at 6:55 a.m. and the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit dispatched. McCauley and Curly found the victim to be in fair condition and aided in his helicopter evacuation at 9:10 a.m.

Injuries were amazingly minor, with only a broken right hand and numerous abrasions. (Source: Werner Landry)

Analysis

Zaeschmar had many years of experience in the mountains and was in marathon running condition. The climb is class 2 or 3 and was well within his ability. I believe that his lack of knowledge regarding the use of crampons and general ice technique was the major cause of this incident. He was instructed on two separate occasions regarding his straps and demonstrated proper knowledge. His lack of experience in

this area of mountaineering, the darkness, perhaps being last and wanting to hurry and catch up, were all factors leading to his fall. A rope could have prevented this accident, but is generally not part of the equipment for such an ascent. (Source: Werner Landry)

FALL ON ROCK, RAPPEL FAILURE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT **California, Yosemite Valley**

On May 22, James Waugh (27) and John Darsis (30) were on El Capitan climbing The Nose and were two pitches short of the Dolt Tower. Waugh fell, injuring his finger. They then decided to descend. Waugh rappelled first, and placed a nut half way down to stabilize the ropes in a high wind. Darsis followed after Waugh anchored in at the end of the rappel. When Darsis reached the nut, his shirt got caught in his figure eight. He tried to cut the shirt out, and in the process cut both of his rappel ropes, which proceeded to blow away in the wind. He was able to hold on to the two remaining rope sections and run them through the nut anchor he was on. He then hauled up more nuts and stabilized his position on what he felt was an expanding flake. They then yelled for help. With direction from the Ranger staff, they were able to make two pendulums over to Sickle Ledge, where some fixed ropes were left in place for them. They then descended to the ground. (Source: Hal Grovert, SAR Officer, Yosemite National Park)

Analysis

As we are seeing more and more in Yosemite with the decline in the mystique of the big walls, climbers are not carrying gear such as hammers, pins, or bolt kits. These things should be taken along to be used in case of trouble. They don't have to be used on the climb, but they should be available for use in case of emergencies. Climbers should carry gear which would enable them to rescue themselves and thereby avoid the necessity of yelling for help. (Source: Hal Grovert, SAR Officer, Yosemite National Park)

FALLING ROCK **California, Yosemite Valley**

At 2 p.m. on June 12, Larry Fennern (29) was climbing The Caverns route (5.7) when he was struck by a falling rock. Fennern was on the third pitch when the accident occurred. A party of four other climbers got to Fennern. By using their combined equipment, they lowered Fennern to the ground, and he was taken to the clinic. Fennern had a shattered scapula. (Source: Hal Grovert, SAR Officer, Yosemite National Park)

Analysis

This accident occurred in a very popular climbing area. The many climbers walk across the ledge system above the climbs on their descents. Almost no one wears a hard hat while climbing in Yosemite; in this case, the person took a hit on the shoulder,