

**SLIP ON ICE, PLACED NO PROTECTION****Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mt. Olympus (Fryatt Valley)**

On August 12, 1979, an Outward Bound expedition of eight young climbers (15 to 18 years of age), led by Tim Sales, was climbing an ice col on Mt. Olympus. A rope of four people led by a more experienced member was involved in the mishap. The second man on the rope slipped and started sliding down the ice. Herzfeld received a compound fracture of the lower leg, and Lisa Lundal broke her wrist attempting to self arrest. The other two climbers received no injuries. This expedition was the first exposure to mountaineering for most of the group. (Source: D. A. Dumpleton, Jasper National Park)

**Analysis**

It is not known how steep the ice slope was, but in general, it is not a good idea to move together roped on an ice slope where an ice ax arrest may not work. (Source: R. Reader)

**AVALANCHE, INEXPERIENCE****British Columbia, Rocky Mountains, Stanley Basin**

On February 24, 1979, two cross-country skiers, Michael Roger Cheng and Allison Joan Bonnie, of Calgary, Alberta, died in an avalanche in the Stanley Basin in Kootenay National Park.

A party of four cross-country skiers toured via the Stanley Trail into the head of the large basin below Stanley Glacier. After stopping for lunch near the place where the valley bottom steepens, they proceeded up the main slope making several switchbacks on the steeper left side of the valley. Eventually the party started to ski down the slope with Warren Blair in the lead. The slope released from a chute very high above them. All four skiers were caught in the slide and carried 300–600 feet down the valley. Blair and Debbie Dyke were partially buried. They called for help and were dug out by other skiers who were coming up the valley. They then located and dug up Cheng but were unable to find Bonnie. Word was sent out to the highway and a rescue party by Banff and Kootenay National Park Warden Service was initiated. A team of 14 wardens and two search dogs was flown into the area. The probeline was working until late at night and under adverse conditions. Continued snowfall added even greater danger to the already existing avalanche hazard with no safe escape route available to the search party. The search party decided to ski out at 9 p.m.

February 25: No improvement in the weather—snowing and storming all day. The search party was unable to move into the basin due to high risks of further avalanches.

February 26: The weather improved, the avalanche slopes affecting the search area were bombed from the helicopter resulting in good slide releases and stabilized the area. A 26-man probeline and three search dogs continued to search for Bonnie.

At 4:35 p.m., the probeline found the body at a depth of 14 feet. The total depth of the avalanche deposit at this place was 17 feet. (Source: H. Fuhrer, Kootenay National Park)

**Analysis**

The winter of 1978–79 was a typical avalanche hazardous year with steady cold weather and continuous hoar build-up. The Stanley Glacier trail was posted as avalanche hazardous. The party was inexperienced. At the head of the valley, they chose a typical avalanche prone slope to ski on. (Source: H. Fuhrer)

*(Ed. Note: This accident, while not a climbing or ski mountaineering accident, is included to illustrate how non-mountaineers can become involved in mountaineering situations.)*