

### **Analysis**

The men were both from New York State and were unfamiliar with winter water ice in the Rockies. The exit on this climb requires an awkward horizontal reach to place a tool into solid ice. The climber cannot remember how he fell, but we assume that as he reached forward to place his ice tool, he leaned in over the flat "top" of the ice pillar and levered his front points out of the ice.

The climber was cold and tired and in a hurry to finish the climb. (Source: C. Israelson, Banff National Park)

## **FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING UNROPED, NO HARD HAT**

### **British Columbia, Squamish, Little Smoke Bluffs**

On March 12, 1981, Clayton Maitland (19) was attempting to free solo a 40-foot-high thin crack called Flying Circus which is graded 5.10. He did not seem to be having any difficulty but suddenly fell out of the crack from about 30 feet up, landing on boulders at the bottom. He suffered a broken wrist, a dislocated elbow with severely pinched nerves, a concussion, unconsciousness, and extensive small cuts and bruises.

Maitland was climbing alone but, fortunately, the fall was seen by one of a group of geology students who were just leaving the area. One of the students immediately ran for help, while the teacher and another student applied first aid. (Source: F. Baumann Mountain Rescue Group)

### **Analysis**

Free soloing does not allow any room for error. The crucial point is that he was climbing by himself. Had it not been for the witnesses who happened to be there, the outcome might have been much more serious. Without prompt treatment, including an operation, he might have lost the use of his arm. The use of a hard hat would have helped to prevent the head injuries. (Source: F. Baumann, Mountain Rescue Group)

## **FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE, PARTY SEPARATED, STRANDED, FROSTBITE**

### **British Columbia, Rocky Mountains, Mount Assiniboine**

On August 2, 1981, a party of two from the eastern United States climbed Mount Assiniboine from the hut. On the descent they separated on easier terrain at about the midpoint on the normal route. E. F. (25) followed what he thought were steps in the snow that led him off route and down into a rocky buttress west of the route. He eventually reached a spot from which he could neither ascend nor descend and was benighted. His call for assistance was relayed to Banff and he was slung off the face at midday on August 3. He suffered frostbite on all the toes on his left foot and on two toes on his right foot. (Source: T. Auger, Banff National Park; C. Saldeir, East Kootenay Park District)

### **Analysis**

Assiniboine was this party's first climb in the Rockies. The mountain has a pyramid shape so, on the descent, a climber is faced with an increasing choice of routes. An experienced mountaineer will keep an eye on landmarks for the descent while making the ascent. The "tracks" in the snow which he followed had been made by falling rock. (Source: T. Auger, Banff National Park)