

Wallens returned to the valley with Walton and gave him a ride to St. John's Hospital. (Source: John Carr, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

Walton was climbing in lightweight hiking shoes and was not carrying an ice ax. He also sustained scratches on his right hip and leg as a result of wearing shorts. (Source: John Carr, Grand Teton National Park)

FALL ON SNOW, UNROPED, INEXPERIENCE

Wyoming, Tetons

On August 11, 1981, about 6:00 p.m., Travis Plunkett (22) slipped on a snow patch in the south fork of Garnet Canyon while descending from the Middle Teton. Plunkett slid about 100 feet and hit some rocks at the base of the snow, damaging his left ankle. Olsen and Plunkett reached the Garnet Meadows and camped there that night. About 7:00 p.m. on August 12, Ranger Bob Irvine administered first aid and contacted the Jenny Lake Ranger Station for transportation. Ranger Tom Owen met Plunkett at the Garnet Platforms with horses and transported him to Lupine Meadows. Plunkett was driven to St. John's Hospital by Olsen at 3:30 p.m. (Source: Tom Kimbrough, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

During the 1981 summer in the Tetons, falls on snow accounted for five injuries and one death, all to climbers of moderate or little experience. Perhaps our emphasis on high standards of rock and ice climbing have left the hazards of a 35-degree snow slope unrespected by beginning mountaineers. (Source: Craig Patterson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

FAILURE OF RAPPEL, NO HARD HAT, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, INEXPERIENCE

Wyoming, Tetons

Around 4:30 p.m. on September 7, 1981, Joe Bailey (23) was descending from the summit of Nez Perce. He set up a rappel at 11,500 feet despite the fact that his partners had down-climbed the pitch and urged him to do the same. He anchored to a large boulder that was lying on the ledge he was about to descend from. As he stepped over the edge, the boulder dislodged and pulled his anchor loose.

Bailey fell approximately 100 feet before hitting a large ledge and then somersaulting another 50 feet to the edge of the same ledge. His five climbing partners, who were waiting on the ledge, saw the fall and were immediately at his side. Bill Rosqvist briefly examined the injured climber, and instructed the others to stay with Bailey and to do what they could for him; then he departed for Lupine Meadows to get help.

At 7:10 p.m., he arrived at Ranger Bob Irvine's cabin where he was met by Rangers Irvine, Hollis, Harris and Patterson. As coordinator, Patterson instructed Harris to round up the available rescue team and have them ready to go out overnight as soon as possible.

They were unable to get a Forest Service helicopter, so Kjerstad was contracted. At 8:15 p.m., Harris and McQuarie had landed in the south fork of Garnet Canyon with emergency medical supplies. No other flights were attempted because of poor light.