

severe lee-slope loading in the area and evidence of an underlying unstable layer in the form of depth hoar.

The accident could most likely have been avoided if the party had retreated after they triggered the first slump instead of continuing down the gully. (Source: D. Stinson, Jasper National Park)

*(Editor's Note: Although this is not a mountaineering accident, it is included to illustrate a typical slab avalanche hazard.)*

## **FALL INTO CREVASSE**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Athabasca Glacier**

Near noon on May 9, 1982, Peter Aitchison (39), Dorland Brown (31) and Everett Fee (36) (all experienced in mountain touring) were skiing up the middle of the Athabasca Glacier in the Canadian Rockies. Just above the first icefall, the leader (Dorland) fell into a crevasse which was covered by an unbelievably thin bridge. One ski spanned the crevasse and he flipped upside-down. His pack restricted his breathing and he called for immediate help. Rope was pulled in until he was almost at the top of the crevasse. At this point, the ski slipped off the edges of the crevasse and his full weight came onto the rope. The two rescuers could not support this weight with their hands and all of the rope that had been pulled in was released. The victim ended up about 30 feet down. He lost a ski pole and cracked two ribs. (Source: E. Fee)

### **Analysis**

The second fall was the more serious one and it could have been prevented. Before pulling up any rope from a fallen leader, the rescuers should have anchored themselves and used a proper belay. (Source: E. Fee)

## **FALLING ROCK, FALL ON ROCK**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Cascade Mountain**

A party of four rock-climbing instructors from the Vernon Army Cadet Camp, who were training in Banff, were climbing a rock buttress above the Banff Army Cadet Camp on June 26, 1982, their day off. They were wearing light clothing, including T-shirts and shorts.

Near the top of the moderate route, the man seconding the lead rope was nearing the final belay when a large block he was standing on broke away and fell on the leader of the second rope. This man fell ten meters before being caught by his protection. He ended up hanging head downwards and was unconscious for several minutes before being reached. Despite his helmet, he suffered a concussion as well as cuts and abrasions. The injuries were partly caused by the falling rock and partly by the fall.

The accident was witnessed by staff at the Cadet Camp who reported it to the Banff Warden Office. (Source: T. Auger and T. Davidson, Banff National Park)