

At 1015 on May 28, Gerhard was notified that a C-130 would fly at 1115. At 1400 the C-130 reported that it was calm at 4300 meters. At 1500 the Chinook landed in Talkeetna, it left Talkeetna at 1615 and airlifted Dennen from 4400 meters at 1700. Three injured Germans and Redfern accompanied Dennen to Providence Hospital in Anchorage, where Doctors Hackett, Newman and Hollingshead decided that the uninjured Redfern should stay with Dennen and provide crucial psychological support for his young partner. Dennen was a climbing instructor and the doctors were certain that he would lose some of his fingers. (Source: Jon Waterman, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

Analysis

It is to Dennen's credit that he survived this ordeal. This accident demonstrates once again the problem of having no support when climbing alone.

The cluster of accidents, of which this is one, that occurred during a brief period illustrates the magnitude of search and rescue logistics which park officials must cope with. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON SNOW, HYPOTHERMIA, FROSTBITE

Alaska Mount McKinley

On June 4, 1982, two Japanese climbers were discovered at the 5000-meter level of the West Rib of Mount McKinley. They were unconscious and had to be evacuated to the High Latitude Research Program's (HLRP) tent at 4300 meters. The Japanese were stabilized there and were evacuated by U.S. Army Chinooks on June 7.

On May 23, Takashi Kanda (32) and Mamoru Ida (48) were flown into Kahiltna Base Camp (2100 meters) by Cliff Hudson. The two did not register with the National Park Service prior to their climb on Mount McKinley.

On May 31, Peter Hackett and Brian Okonek of the HLRP were making a one-day ascent of the West Rib from the 4400-meter camp. While climbing, they met the Japanese camped at 5300 meters (balcony camp) on the West Rib. They talked a short time and got an altimeter reading from the Japanese before climbing to the summit. At the HLRP camp, two Koreans, who had ascended the West Rib route to 4300 meters on May 22, mentioned that they had not seen any Japanese climbers on the route. The HLRP became concerned and started scanning the West Rib for the Japanese whenever the weather allowed. The winds had been severe the past few days, with estimates of 145 kph.

On June 4 at 1500, Okonek spotted two dots just north of the West Rib at 5000 meters. With binoculars, he could see skid marks in the gully and speculated that the dots were the two Japanese. This was the exact place where Okonek had seen two Koreans die in 1979. At 1600, Okonek and Hackett left to survey the situation, carrying two sleds, personal gear and a CB radio. About a third of the way up, the two noticed a sudden change in the position of the climbers. They radioed to HLRP to organize a second party to bring up medical supplies since it seemed that the two climbers might still be alive. When they reached the Japanese, both were unconscious and Kanda was thrashing and moaning. Hackett radioed the HLRP and requested that more people come up and help with the evacuation. By the time

Hackett and Okonek had gotten Kanda into the sled, two more climbers had arrived and helped haul Kanda back down to camp. Halfway down, the group met the large rescue team of nine people; two stayed with Hackett's group and the other seven went up to help evacuate Ida.

At 2100, the first group arrived at the HLRP camp. Kanda had no broken bones and no frostbite. Ida, who reached the camp at 2230, had more serious head injuries as well as frostbite of the hands, feet, and penis. The HLRP weatherport was heated to 100°F and both injured climbers were stabilized with intravenous fluids, oxygen, and catheters. (Source: Scott Gill, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

Analysis

Kanda's and Ida's lives were undoubtedly saved by the elaborate facilities of the HLRP camp at 4400 meters and by the personnel staffing it at the time. When the incident occurred, there were two neurologists and one neurosurgeon. (Source: Scott Gill, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

Alaska, Mount McKinley

On June 12, 1982, a seven-member Fantasy Ridge guided party (led by Michael Covington) established a camp on the Peters Glacier to climb the Northwest Buttress of Mount McKinley.

During the night of June 13, Ariane Giobellina (30) began to display signs of distress. By morning, it had become imperative that Giobellina return to Kahiltna Base, so she and assistant guide, Steve Gall, departed at 0900. During the descent, her condition (possibly a nervous breakdown) deteriorated. Giobellina and Gall reached Kahiltna Base on June 15 at 1130 hours. Gall then reported Giobellina's condition to Frances Randall (Base Camp Manager). At 1230, Randall notified Ranger Roger Robinson at the Talkeetna Ranger Station who in turn apprised pilot Doug Geeting of Talkeetna Air Taxi of the emergency situation.

Poor weather delayed the evacuation until 1900 on June 16 when Geeting was able to fly in and bring Giobellina out. The Talkeetna Ambulance Service transported her to Alaska Hospital in Anchorage; she was later admitted to the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

The following account of the incident was submitted to Ranger Roger Robinson by Steve Gall on June 20.

"The first time Michael Covington and I noticed that Ariane Giobellina was not well was during the night of June 13. She was very restless and agitated and did not respond very well to commands. At daybreak and, subsequently, through breakfast, she became hyperactive, even though she'd eaten nothing and had had no sleep for 20 hours. At this point, it was necessary for her to be dressed and outfitted by members of the expedition.

"With our camp on the north side of Kahiltna Pass, it was necessary to regain the pass and downclimb back onto the Kahiltna Glacier where we had our ski cache at 3100 meters. At this point on June 13, Covington took the remaining team (5