

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

together) and headed up the West Buttress while I departed for Kahiltna Base with Giobellina. For the next 19 hours, until 0400 on June 15, she continued to worsen in condition and mental capability. At virtually every camp encountered, she'd scream and get hysterical, unrope and run off. This continued until we reached the base of the hill where we put the tent up and started the stove. At this point, she'd been up for 40 hours; myself 22 hours. I had purposely exhausted her and made her hypothermic to calm her down and, hopefully, allow her to get some rest.

"For two hours she remained in her bag while I brewed and rehydrated the both of us. After this period, she once again began to get restless, throwing hot water around the tent and in general creating havoc. I struck camp and headed for Kahiltna Base, which took another five hours due to her outbursts.

"Upon arriving at Kahiltna Base, I informed Frances Randall of my situation and she began the radio work. In the meantime, I also discussed the problem with the VAA Medical Team. For the next six hours, we sat away from the main Kahiltna Base Camp area so as not to alarm Giobellina or bother the other groups while we waited for a plane.

"At 0800 on June 15, knowing the planes weren't coming, I put the tent up, got Giobellina inside and commenced brewing. It wasn't long before the hysterics began, more violent than before, throwing water and stove, running around the tent, and a general sense of paranoia. At 1000 the psychologist from the Medical Team yelled that Giobellina had become violent and destructive and that he would need some help in restraining her. She was now running about camp as I tried to put the stove and cook gear away. With Randall's help, we coaxed her to the medical tent where we tried to calm her. I now basically released her into the care of the doctors there. At this point, I'd been up for 37 hours; Giobellina 57 hours.

"At midnight she was given 10 mg of Valium Intermuscular with the hope she would sleep and escorted to the tent, where we placed her in her bag. After watching her a few minutes, I returned to the medical tent to discuss the problem with the doctors. It wasn't 15 minutes before she was up and moving again. An Australian doctor and a French doctor were called in to help at this point, as there were no more sedative or tranquilizing drugs in camp.

"The Australian and I continued watching her as the others sought rest for another 7½ hours until 0730 on June 16, when we were relieved of watch to sleep ourselves.

"During the four hours that I rested, the nurse and the psychologist managed to get her to take Valium orally and she was sleeping when I returned at noon. I continued watching her as Randall organized the evacuation and transportation to help. Throughout the day she'd suddenly awake and get very violent, striking the doctor and me.

"Finally, at 2000, Randall let us know that Doug Geeting was coming in. We loaded her aboard and flew to Talkeetna where an ambulance was waiting." (Source: Roger Robinson, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

Analysis

As stated before, there are many unknowns in guided parties; screening clients is difficult at best. (Source: J. Williamson)