

lacerations to the lower jaw, and considerable lacerations to one upper thigh. As of February 1983, the climber is in his fifth cast, with two pins holding his arm and wrist together. (Source: Chris Wyman)

Analysis

The severity of the fall could have been lessened if additional protection had been placed. If the climber had not hit the ledge, it is quite possible that the fixed pin might have failed. (Source: Chris Wyman)

STRANDED, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, DARKNESS, INEXPERIENCE Oregon, Columbia River Gorge

At noon on April 19, 1982, Brad Philips (18) and Justin Cramer (17) began their attempt of Beacon Rock. They had been rained out on Saturday and Sunday.

Using a 30-meter rope, they were on the fourth or fifth pitch of the 280-meter promontory when the climb ended. According to Philips, "We couldn't go down because the rope wasn't long enough to rappel. We couldn't climb up because it was dark and too dangerous—we couldn't see where our handholds and footholds were."

They waited on the climb while Philips' brother, Wade, who was on the ground at Beacon Rock, notified the Skamania County Sheriff's Office in Stevenson at 2123.

Dispatcher David O'Brien said that Philips and Cramer were "approximately three fourths of the way up. They were not well equipped, had no flashlight, were not dressed for the cold, had just a small bit of water and food."

"The rescue was not routine," said Captain John Baczuk of the 304th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. "It was nighttime, which is always kind of fun, and upwards of 40-knot winds in the gorge, which makes it kind of tricky hovering the helicopter. Our guy on the ground was blown into the rocks a couple of times when he was on the hoist." He was not injured. The rescue was completed by 0300. (Source: *The Oregonian*, April 21, 1982)

Analysis

The number of rescue missions in this area is increasing. Skamania County Sheriff Bill Closner made the following comments regarding the problem:

"The problem is, even though the mountaineering community wishes not to be regulated—and I appreciate the position—the search and rescue problems have increased to a point where the volunteer community can't cover the amount of rescue missions going on."

The sheriff said that he has called on mountain search and rescue units from Bremerton, Seattle, Tacoma and Portland, as well as the Alpines and Crag Rats in Hood River, to assist in rescues.

Although signs forbid the public from climbing the north face of Beacon Rock, that doesn't always stop the venturesome. However, according to Closner, most of the rescues have been on the south face of the rock, above the Columbia River. The south face, which is exposed to the Columbia Gorge winds, also looms above the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks.

"I know governments shouldn't try to control everybody's actions, but there comes a point where the burnout is pretty evident," Closner said. "There are enough hazards to it as an attraction with just the trail to climb that we don't need that added attraction," Closner said.

"The problem is that Beacon Rock has been a climbing rock to both inexperienced and experienced people; there's no standard as to who is allowed to go and who is not. It's a little hard to make a decision as to who ought to be qualified to climb," he said. (Source: *The Oregonian*, April 30, 1982)

SLIP ON SNOW, SKIING, INEXPERIENCE

Oregon, Mount Hood

On Saturday, April 24, 1982, after a group spent nine hours climbing and preparing to ski from the summit of Mount Hood, it took only a minute of skiing for most of the party to be placed in life-threatening jeopardy.

One skier lost control on the steep, icy slope above Crater Rock. She slid 50 meters before the ice ax in her pack miraculously dug in and stopped the skid.

The leader of the group saw the mishap and went to help. He lost control and slid 30 meters before crashing into some rocks. Somehow, he managed to slide between the large rocks and take the brunt of the impact on his pack. He escaped unhurt but shaken.

While this was going on, Terry Richard was hung up in three parallel ice-coated ridges, unable to go left, right or down. The only escape was to take off the skis and walk up. A mistake would have meant a 300-meter slide down a 30-degree slope.

Another skier managed to avoid trouble by making big traverses across the steep slope, the only safe way to descend. The fifth skier, after witnessing the mishaps, wisely dug a bench where she sat down to switch from skis to crampons so she could walk down.

Even after assembling behind Crater Rock and letting their heartbeats slacken, the group was not out of trouble. The area is Mount Hood's "hot spot," which means the snow is rotten underneath.

One skier crashed through the surface into the foul-smelling abyss. Fortunately, the hole was less than 1½ meters deep, so the only damage was to her confidence.

For others, who might be considering a similar trip, it appeared that short skis contributed to the two slides. Although they were easier to carry to the summit, they didn't offer the necessary control on the steep, icy slopes afforded by longer skis.

Richard's trouble occurred because he was asked to wear a helmet with a movie camera mounted to it. An extra six pounds on the head is no way to ski off Mount Hood. (Source: Terry Richard, *The Oregonian*, April 30, 1982)

Analysis

As it turned out, the group had an excellent day for climbing but a poor day for skiing. Despite a week of sunshine, wind had prevented the snow on the upper mountain from softening.