

climbers with the knowledge of safety techniques. Unfortunately, we have found that as each class completes the course, the number of climbers on the bluff increases proportionately, since there are few other places in the midwest to climb.

Ironically, the climbing classes have swollen the ranks of climbers to the point of pushing former climbers to the more isolated areas of the bluffs and unfortunately less accessible for rescue purposes. More climbers will undoubtedly lead to more falls just by the sheer number of people on the rocks.

A related problem of more climbers is the hiker/climber conflict. Ropes secured to trees and rocks on top of the bluff areas are sometimes stretched across hiking trails. Backpacks, ropes, gear and climbers themselves are often laid out on trails making passage difficult for hikers. Climbers often climb directly over hiking trails creating a dangerous situation.

Some unique geologic rock formations such as the balanced rock and Devil's Doorway here at Devil's Lake may already be overused and abused by rock climbers. Other park visitors' desires to view and photograph these and other natural rock formations without the "spaghetti effect" of ropes, anchors and people all over them must be taken into account.

As the sport grows among clubs, universities and private classes, and as our visitor days number 1¼ million per year, it is apparent that some sort of control will be necessary in the near future. We are confident there can be a place for climbers and hikers alike.

(Source: J. Williamson and James Buchholz)

FALL ON SNOW, FALL INTO MOAT, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, INEXPERIENCE

Wyoming, Tetons

On June 18, 1982, 24 members of a geology field trip from Western Illinois University hiked to the base of Hidden Falls on the west side of Jenny Lake. Upon arriving at the falls, six members of the group, Rich Schaffer (22), Mark Mitchell (23), Henry Morris (23), Brian O'Neil (23) and two others decided to climb up Symmetry Couloir "to see how high they could get." The group leader, John Mohr, advised the six against making the trip but they decided to go anyway.

Around 1400, the four named hikers reached the col between Ice Point and Symmetry Spire at the top of the couloir. On the ascent they had picked up sticks to use as alpenstocks, since the slope was steep (35–40 degrees) and their slick-soled boots were providing little traction.

After a brief stop at the col, the four started down, electing to slide since they were behind schedule and hadn't noticed any particular hazards during the ascent. After a few "check slides" to make sure they could stop, they started down with Mitchell leading and Schaffer second, followed by Morris and O'Neil.

The slope began to steepen and soon the group was in only marginal control. Their descent route was also slightly to the north of their ascent route and they were channelled into a narrow snow chute that ended in an 18-meter waterfall and moat. Mitchell saw the moat and was able to grab some bushes and stop himself but was unable to hold onto Schaffer who slid over the falls and into the moat. Mitchell yelled to Morris and, at the last moment, he was able to vault the moat

and land downslope from the falls. Mitchell then grabbed O'Neil and was able to hold onto him.

After yelling down the moat for several minutes, O'Neil and Mitchell started down for help; Morris continued to yell but did not get any answer. Rangers John Carr and Ed Thompson, who were coming down from a climb in the area, heard the shouts and received a report of a possible accident simultaneously; they then descended to the scene.

Upon arrival, Thompson radioed for a helicopter, rescuers in wetsuits, and medical supplies for hypothermia, while Carr set up a belay. Thompson then donned a cagoule and downclimbed the waterfall into the moat. At the bottom of the waterfall, about 15 meters into the moat, Thompson found Schaffer's body. He was lying face down in about 15 cm of water, with massive head injuries and showing no signs of life.

Thompson climbed back up the waterfall and reported the fatality. After Rangers Chuck Harris and Craig Patterson arrived in wetsuits, Schaffer's body was recovered by a simple pulley system and flown from the scene in a contract helicopter. (Source: Ed Thompson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

Analysis

The entire field-trip group was told several times not to leave established trails and the assistant group leaders were supposed to enforce and obey this rule. None of the hikers was equipped for snow travel or had any climbing experience. Even though the four hikers found that the climb was so steep they needed sticks for support, none of them turned back. They also did not seem to have had second thoughts about trying to slide back down the slope. This type of accident is increasing in frequency, especially early in the season, as more and more people get onto snow slopes without proper experience and equipment. (Source: Ed Thompson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

(Editor's Note: This is considered to be a hiking rather than a climbing accident.)

FALL ON ROCK, UNROPED, HYPOTHERMIA

Wyoming, Tetons

At 0400 on the morning of July 11, 1982, Dan McKay (26), a noted local skier, left the Lower Saddle in an attempt to ski down the Grand Teton on cross-country skis. He was not an experienced mountaineer although he had climbed the Grand once before via the Owen-Spaulding route. Since he couldn't find anyone to accompany him and belay him on the harder sections, he decided to go solo. Several friends advised him not to attempt it. For years McKay had wanted to do the first three-pin descent of the Grand but he never felt the conditions were quite right. In June 1982, Rick Wyatt skied the Grand in touring gear and McKay was disappointed that he'd missed his "first." McKay also had a deadline to meet for his column in *Powder* magazine. All these things came together and he decided to make the first "complete" ski descent of the Grand Teton. All previous descents had included a rappel (Wyatt downclimbed) past an overhanging section of the Stettner Couloir.) McKay didn't seem to know that there is no continuous snow route down the mountain.

A friend convinced McKay to look at the route he intended to ski before he started down it, so he headed for the base of the Stettner Couloir instead of the