

Fourteen accidents resulted in fractures, including abrasions and lacerations, while the rest resulted in a variety of injuries, primarily abrasions and lacerations.

In future editions, we hope to have more reporting efforts like this reflected in order to provide a more complete picture of climbing accidents as the sport continues to grow. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, INEXPERIENCE

Montana, Glacier National Park

On October 12, 1983, Ken Lynch (28) and Steve Fernekes (27) were picking their way down from the top of Swiftcurrent Peak Glacier on the north face. They were attempting to work down approximately 30 meters and then work their way around to the south slopes. Fernekes had climbed down to a ledge. Lynch handed down some equipment and was attempting to climb down to the ledge. Fernekes was holding Lynch's foot in a small crack. Lynch lost his hold, fell approximately six meters, and was stopped by rock. Fernekes fell and slipped off the ledge and down the rock face about 180 meters, landing in the bergschrund. (Source: Oakley Blair, Ranger, Glacier National Park)

Analysis

There was snow-covered ice on the rocks running seven to twelve centimeters deep. Footing conditions were considered extremely hazardous. There had been rain and snow intermittently over several days preceding October 12. On the day of the accident the sky was clear, with slight breezes and a daytime temperature of 5°C and an evening temperature of -3°C. The aspect of this side of the mountain is situated where the sun is blocked out and is in a shadow at this time of the year. The south side of the mountain is completely exposed to the sun and was void of snow.

These climbers did not have crampons, ropes, helmets, hardware, or adequate clothing, and had little experience. (Source: Oakley Blair, Ranger, Glacier National Park)

FALL ON ROCK, INEXPERIENCE

New Hampshire, Mount Washington

On December 31, 1982, at 2300, Edward Aalbue (21) fell to his death while out looking for a friend who was overdue from a climb of the Central Gully in Huntington Ravine. Aalbue went out toward the climb from Harvard Cabin, where he and his friends from an outing club at a New York college were staying. He slipped on a rock, six or seven meters up from the base of the climb, and landed on his head on the scree and talus below. (Source: Rick Wilcox, New Hampshire Mountain Rescue Service)

Analysis

While this is not considered a climbing accident, it is reported to illustrate how quickly hiking can turn into a climbing situation. Aalbue was concerned for his friend, but did not have the proper equipment and training for the conditions