

Analysis

While the climbing group was generally experienced and well prepared, the soft snow conditions on Eliot Headwall obviously resulted in several slips and subsequent falls throughout the climb. The warm weather may also have resulted in poor ice conditions on the rock band. Eliot Glacier Headwall is a high-angle ice climb and is in very poor condition when the snow is soft. Head protection is suggested for the route because it is continually exposed to rockfall.

The failure of the belay from the rock band remains unexplained, although two ideas are reasonable. The rock on Mount Hood is often poorly indurated and frequently does not provide an adequate anchor point for a belayer. This may have been one contributing factor to the accident. A second idea has been postulated by the victims: They have suggested that they may have felt a false sense of security when they reached the rock band, thus relaxing their guard momentarily.

The injured climbers' decision to move themselves down the mountain, despite their injuries, greatly facilitated their rescue and played an essential role in saving their lives. Had they remained on the scene with Ravin, their evacuation would have been very technical and required much more time. (Source: W. Jerry Bryan, Hood River Crag Rats)

(Editor's Note: No other reports from Oregon were available at press time.)

RAPPEL FAILURE, CLIMBING ALONE, INEXPERIENCE Texas, Mount Bonnell

On January 15, 1983, Bruce Spiegelberg (22) fell eight meters while rappelling on Mount Bonnell. "I was looking up, and it happened just like that," Spiegelberg said from his bed in Brackenridge Hospital. "It was probably a piece of glass, because the rope looked like a knife cut through it."

Spiegelberg fell eight meters while rappelling down the mountain, landing in sandy gravel. He said it was fortunate that he did not land on a nearby rock, which would have inflicted more serious injury. He sustained a fractured back and pelvis, which his doctors think can be mended through therapy.

"I was pretty lucky," Spiegelberg said. "If I had been higher up, I might have gotten seriously hurt."

He said he was attracted to the sport because of the thrill and because he likes heights. A native of St. Paul, Minnesota, he said he had learned rappelling from a friend about nine months ago.

"The climbing around here is pretty good, but I don't think it's high enough," he said. (Source: *Austin-American-Statesman*, January 16, 1983)

RAPPEL FAILURE, FAILURE TO TEST ANCHOR, INEXPERIENCE Utah, Wasatch Range

On February 23, 1983, Kurt Fashimpuar (18) fell fifteen meters onto a scree slope when his two-and-a-half-centimeter webbing sling anchor broke just as he was about

to rappel. He suffered a cerebral concussion and a fractured coccyx. (Source: Dr. Richard Wallin, Salt Lake City)

Analysis

Fashimpuar's friends had placed the webbing sling through a three-piton anchor system, but was unfamiliar with the self-equalizing setup. Without testing the anchor or checking for sharp-angled rock contact, Fashimpuar backed up two steps and the webbing parted, probably from being cut on a sharp edge. He had just purchased the sling, and had never climbed with experienced people before. (Source: Dr. Richard Wallin, Salt Lake City)

FALLING ROCK, NO HARD HAT

Utah, Lone Peak

On June 27, 1983, Eric Sieg (17) was struck by a 12-kilogram rock in the side of the head while climbing on Lone Peak Cliff with his partner, Ken Speirs (17). This happened around 1930, and by 0300 on June 28, he was flown to LDS Hospital. He suffered a depressed skull fracture. (Source: Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office, Report 83-47921)

Analysis

The climbers were well equipped with essential technical gear. They elected not to wear hard hats. The area in which they were climbing is remote. The helicopter pilot's skill was called upon and probably made a difference in the results of this accident. (Source: J. Williamson)

LOSS OF CONTROL-VOLUNTARY GLISSADE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, INEXPERIENCE

Utah, Storm Mountain

On July 16, 1983, a group of Boy Scouts, led by Don Jorgenson (36), hiked up to Stairs Gulch in Big Cottonwood Canyon to do some glissading. Jorgenson lost control of his glissade and started cartwheeling. He went over a band of rock before stopping. Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue climbed to the victim and lowered him to a place where he could be evacuated by helicopter. (Source: Jens Lund, Salt Lake City County Sheriff's Search and Rescue)

FALL ON ICE, CLIMBING ALONE

Utah, Little Cottonwood Canyon

On December 27, 1983, Roger Amory (21) was climbing on a popular ice route at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon when his ice tools came out near the top of the climb, resulting in a fall. Two other climbers in the area became concerned when Amory was no longer visible on the face. They descended to the bottom of the route and found him. Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue evacuated Amory. (Source: Jens Lund, Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue)