

injuries would have been more serious had he not been wearing a helmet. (Source: Craig Patterson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

## **FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, PLACED NO PROTECTION**

### **Wyoming, Tetons**

On August 4, 1983, at 1335, I received a report from Ranger Bob Irvine of an accident on the Jensen Ridge on Symmetry Spire. Irvine said the reporting party had just reached the west boat dock on Jenny Lake and was on his way across. I contacted dispatch immediately for a helicopter and proceeded to the rescue cache. Once there I was informed that the U.S. Forest Service helicopter could be at Lupine Meadows at 1415.

Shortly after I arrived at the cache the reporting party, Mitchell, arrived and gave me details on the accident. Mitchell stated that he and his friend, Shawn Blakeslee (21), had climbed with Exum Guide Kim Schmitz (37) to the bottom of the Jensen Ridge, where Blakeslee had employed Schmitz to guide him on some "extreme face climbing." Mitchell remained at the base of the climb and took photos of the pair until they disappeared above the fifth pitch. Shortly thereafter, Mitchell said he heard a scream and then Blakeslee calling his name. He said Blakeslee yelled that they had had a bad accident and that Schmitz had two fractured legs, compound. Mitchell said that he went for help immediately and double checked the route with other climbers in the area. By the time that I had gotten the information from Mitchell, Rangers Dorward, Kimbrough, Rickert and Eastman had arrived at the cache. Dorward got medical supplies together while the rest of us began getting equipment together for a long rock raising or lowering. When the Jet Ranger arrived, I sent Kimbrough and Dorward up for a recon with medical gear. Kimbrough reported back that the accident scene was near a large promontory on the Jensen, and that the helicopter could not land on Symmetry and would be proceeding to Ramshead Lake. At this time I was advised that the helicopter was having trouble in thunder showers and could not be at Lupine until 1800. Because of the severe nature of Schmitz' injuries and his location, I contacted Scott AFB to check on getting the Hill AFB SAR helicopter with the hoist. During this period we deployed eight rangers to Ramshead Lake using the U.S. Forest Service helicopter. We then sling loaded the rescue gear to the Symmetry summit bowl about the time that Dorward and Kimbrough arrived. Upon reaching the top of the Jensen Ridge, Kimbrough and Dorward rappelled to the accident scene, arriving there at 1625. After evaluation Dorward reported that Schmitz had a pulse of 76, respiration 22, and a BP of 68 over (?). He was conscious and in extreme pain. He reported the injuries as compound fractures of both lower legs and a major head laceration. Permission was given by Dr. Ken Lambert to start two large IVs and give 1 gm of Kefzol. While Dorward was administering emergency care, splinting Schmitz and putting him in the litter, Hill AFB arrived. After conferring with the pilot who had arrived and reconned the area, the Hill AFB pilot, Bill Thomson, said they would probably hoist Schmitz from the site. At 1845, Hill flew to the scene and after a short recon, executed the hoist from the accident site without a flaw. Schmitz was then flown directly to St. John's Hospital, arriving there at 1925. (Source: E. E. Thompson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

### **Analysis**

After discussion with Schmitz and Blakeslee, the following information was obtained: After climbing the first five pitches of the Jensen Ridge, Schmitz's feet were bothering him in his rock shoes and, due to the easier terrain, he elected to change into his tennis shoes. He started up, still roped, but told his client just to feed him the rope rather than belay. After about 25 meters, Schmitz slipped and grabbed for a hold, which broke off. Schmitz free fell, striking his head on a ledge, and then falling on his client. Blakeslee saw the fall and pulled in the rope, putting on a "semibelay" around his neck and shoulder. After Schmitz hit Blakeslee, Schmitz bounced onto a ledge, where he broke his legs, then bounced onto one lower ledge. Blakeslee's belay stopped Schmitz on the lower ledge and probably saved both of them from being pulled completely off the ridge. Schmitz stated that even though he had done that climb many times and it was well within his capabilities, he should have protected himself better while guiding it. (Source: E. E. Thompson and Craig Patterson, Rangers, Grand Teton National Park)

## **FALLING ROCK**

### **Wyoming, Tetons**

On August 11 at 1130 Ranger Jim Woodmency was hit by rockfall in the Black Ice Couloir on the Grand Teton while on a routine mountain patrol. The rockfall was spontaneous from a ledge on the northeast side of The Enclosure. Woodmency was hit in the helmet and the left forearm at a point 105 meters below the top of the climb. The rocks fell a distance of approximately 12 meters before hitting him. He was able to complete the climb and was treated at St. John's Hospital the next day for contusions of the arm and right temple. The helmet he was wearing was cracked and has since been retired. (Source: Jim Woodmency, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

### **Analysis**

Woodmency figured he would have been killed by the rockfall if he had not been wearing a helmet. He was wearing a Joe Brown Super. (Source: Craig Patterson, Ranger, Grand Teton National Park)

## **FALL ON SNOW, LOSS OF CONTROL—VOLUNTARY GLISSADE**

### **Wyoming, Tetons**

On August 16, Clint Farbow (20), Ted Garner (20), and Joe Bossong (20) were descending from an unsuccessful climb of the Southwest Couloir of the Middle Teton. Farbow was glissading down a snowfield near the saddle between the South and Middle Tetons when he lost control, dropped his ax and slid about 30 meters into the rocks at the bottom of the snow. Bossong and Garner also started to glissade, but when they saw that Farbow had fallen, they stopped and tried to walk to the side of the snowfield. Bossong then fell and slid about 15 meters to the rocks. Farbow suffered contusions and abrasions on his hip and back, while Bossong damaged the ligaments in his right knee.

The group then started to descend and Garner went ahead for help. He reported