

the bed of the gully. He came to rest unburied in the tail of the avalanche, sustaining a broken ankle. The other climber descended the mountain in one and a half hours and notified the warden service.

Because of the danger of hypothermia to the victim, a helicopter sling rescue was carried out at night, something not usually attempted. (Source: Banff Park Warden Service)

### **Analysis**

Steep, shallow snow over rock slabs should rarely be trusted in the Rockies, especially during the first half of the winter season. Since darkness falls at 1730 at this time of year, it would have been more prudent for the climbers to head down rather than go exploring.

The unhurt climber chose to go for help quickly because of the late hour, but he did not provide his partner with sufficient protection from the cold or immobilize his ankle. The victim was already hypothermic when rescued, and would have been in worse condition if a lengthy ground rescue had been necessary. (Source: Banff Park Warden Service)

## **FALL ON ICE**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountains, near Lake Louise**

On March 11, 1984, two ice climbers (26 and 25) attempted the falls near the Plain-of-Six-Glaciers Teahouse in the Lake Louise area of Banff National Park. They traveled to the falls on cross-country skis, carrying full climbing gear. On the water-fall, they climbed to where the leader was one rope length from the top. At this point, the leader slipped while making an overhead move. He fell approximately five meters, hitting his head on the way down, and came to rest on a ledge. His partner then lowered him half a rope length to a safe location. The victim was apparently unconscious for about five minutes. He had also injured his right ankle. Nevertheless, the climbers managed to get back down to the ski trail, and started toward Chateau Lake Louise. The Warden Office heard of the accident and a rescue crew went out to meet the climbers, and brought the victim to Chateau Lake Louise by snowmobile. (Source: Banff Park Warden Service)

### **Analysis**

This was the victim's second accident of the season. Three months before, he had fallen and cracked his ankle. (Source: Banff Park Warden Service)

## **FALL INTO CREVASSE, UNROPED, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountain, Columbia Icefields**

On March 17, 1984, a party of four (30-35) left the Icefields Parkway, Banff National Park, to ascend the Athabasca Glacier and spend several days ski mountaineering in the Columbia Icefields area. They had done a considerable amount of ski touring in the Colorado Rockies, but they were new to the Banff/Jasper area. They had been advised, by someone not local to the area, that any crevasses in the Columbia Icefields would be filled with snow.