

## **FALL, EQUIPMENT FAILURE, LOAD TOO HEAVY FOR PACK**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Lyell Group**

About noon on July 13, 1985, a party of 13 was hiking at 2000 meters on a mountaineering approach. From time to time they would stop and wait for stragglers. At one point they waited about two hours without great concern for a missing climber, since he might have been delayed by difficult sections of the trail. When finally someone went back along the trail to look, he found the missing climber, who had been injured by his pack. He had been carrying a very heavy load, and a shoulder stabilizer strap tore out. The pack pitched sideways, and he fell to the ground in a twisting motion under the heavy load, incurring a severe sprain of the left ankle and lower leg. He required and obtained helicopter evacuation. (Source: Orvel Miskiw, Calgary)

## **FALLING ROCK, FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE**

### **British Columbia, Rocky Mountains, Mount Assiniboine**

On July 26, 1985, around 1300, an experienced climber (20) was ascending on rock toward Hind Hut on his way to Mount Assiniboine. A falling rock struck him on the helmet and dislocated his shoulder. His injury was severe enough so that he could not move. About 1900, he was discovered by a climbing guide, who sent his client down to notify the ranger. The climbing guide bivouacked with the injured climber overnight. At 0500 the next day, another climbing guide was sent to the site with a radio, to direct the Parks Canada Helicopter Rescue Team to the site when it arrived at 0610. They lifted the injured climber off the mountain with a harness and sling. (Source: Gordon McRae, Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park)

### **Analysis**

The climber was off route and in an area of continual rockfall. He had asked directions before departing, but must not have had the route clearly in mind. (Source: Gordon McRae, Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park)

## **CORNICE COLLAPSE**

### **Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mount Patterson**

On July 24, 1985, two men were climbing Bluebird Glacier on Mount Patterson. About 1900 hours, they were two pitches above the bergschrund on the final ice pitch that leads to the summit ridge, where ice slopes about 50 degrees. A large cornice fell 120 meters from the ridge at the top of the pitch and hit both climbers. The lead climber (DK) took a direct hit and was knocked from his stance. He had one screw in place and two ice tools planted, which were tied into his harness with a 5 mm rope and a 2.5 cm tape sling. He had tied himself off to the ice screw with a clove hitch on a carabiner. The carabiner broke in half, and the 5 mm rope and 2.5 cm tape also broke from the impact. DK found half of the carabiner still on the rope when he regained consciousness after the fall. During the fall, he pulled out an intermediate screw. The screw had an "Air Voyager" runner (a folded and sewn tape sling); all the stitching was ripped out before the screw pulled. As DK fell past his partner (JC), he hit him feet first with his crampons, adding to his injuries. DK finally came to an abrupt halt at the end of the rope on the downhill side of the bergschrund. The two screws at the belay position held.

JC's biggest problem upon regaining consciousness was the severe tension in his harness