

as the two victims, who were cross-country skiing, were on a side hill. They were carried to the bottom of a gully by it. Both were wearing Pieps, as were the six other skiers in the area. Victims were located using Pieps. One skier went to Brighton Ski Patrol headquarters to get help. Alta Ski Patrol was helicoptered in, victims were rescued, but one died in the hospital of an abdominal aneurism and the other one day later of hypoxia. (Source: Lt. Mike Wilkinson, Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office)

### **Analysis**

The slide was about 25 meters wide and ran for about 70 meters down the mountain. There was no information about the size of the fracture line.

There had been a storm cycle on the Wasatch Front for 48 hours prior to the slide. There were one to two meters of new powder in the area. The slide took place on a north-east facing slope on the side of Catherine Pass above Lake Mary. (Source: Deputy Thad Moore, Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office)

*(Editor's Note: While not a climbing accident, this report is included to remind back country skiers of mountain hazards.)*

## **STRANDED, EXPOSURE INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT**

### **Utah, Little Cottonwood Canyon**

On November 29, Sean Amastasian (19) and Tony Radcliffe (20) were located at the top of a climb called Split-Pants, or Gate Buttress (5.7). The climbers stated when they went up, the water in the base and on the walls of the climb were liquid, and there was no problem. As the day went on and started to cool down, the water froze making it impossible for the two climbers to descend without climbing equipment and ropes.

The initial Hasty Team followed the standard approach route to the Gate Buttress and then made a five pitch climb to the stranded climbers by climbing directly up the Split-Pants route. The route was covered with verglas. The two were belayed, one at a time, from their positions to a point 20 meters below to another belay point. They were lowered another 25 meters to a tree outcropping, then to a traverse and down a small pitch to the base of Gate Buttress, where they walked to the road and were placed in the Command Post. From there they were evaluated for injuries. Both men were cool but had no apparent frostbite or body temperature problems. (Source: Deputy Thad Moore, Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office)

## **CLIMBING ALONE**

### **Washington, Mount Rainier**

On January 6, 1985, the park communications center received information that there was a climber in the White River area who was preparing for a solo climb. This information was relayed to Park Ranger Bob Martin who was in that area. Martin contacted the climber, Faut D. Dikmen (28) and informed him of park regulations and safety concerns on solo climbs. Martin then prepared a solo climb request and forwarded it to the park's management.

The solo request for Dikmen to leave White River, traverse the north side of the mountain to Liberty Ridge, climb the Liberty Ridge route to the Summit and descend to Paradise was approved on January 7. The approval was relayed to Dikmen through Pierce County Deputy Sheriff Bob Hoffman who lives outside the park, near the White River Entrance.

By January 15, Dikmen had not checked out from his climb as he had planned. There was no great concern, as the weather on the 14th had been bad and held up other climbers at Camp Muir. It was felt that Dikmen was held up a day from the weather. A check was made of the Carbon River area, as Dikmen intended to exit that route if he had problems. There was no sign of Dikmen in the Carbon River area.

On January 16, a ground and aerial search was begun and continued through January 20. The search was extensive, but the victim was not found. His body was eventually found on May 19 by a climbing party at the 3575 meter level. The cause of death is unknown at this writing. (Source: Mount Rainier National Park reports)

### **Analysis**

Faut Dikman, a Turkish citizen, stated he was a Doctoral Candidate at a Wisconsin university, and had spent his last cent on equipment and transportation for this trip. Some time during the conversation Dikmen indicated to me, totally unsolicited, "Hey, I'm not going up there to commit suicide or anything." He went on to state he was an experienced climber and had soloed numerous mountains including Shasta, Ararat (Turkey), and McKinley, and had participated in three or four group climbs on Rainier, but was only successful once via the Emmons Glacier, which he and a friend had not registered for. Judging from his past experience and seemingly adequate equipment, I informed him that I would attempt to get him a Solo Climbing Permit.

Upon my arrival at Park Headquarters in Ashford, Sunday evening, I filled out a Solo Request Form, obtained a weather update and placed the package in the Superintendent's Office. I had noted on said request a concern about Mr. Dikmen having no experience on his intended route and that he had no avalanche training or experience.

As a precaution in the future, I would like to offer a few recommendations for solo climbing attempts. The Park could explore the possibility of issuing and mandating the use of a bright orange pack cover and/or tent cover. This would better facilitate the aerial observation of a soloist. In addition, we might consider issuing flares or even explore the possibility of issuing a transponder or five watt to them. Basically anything we could do or mandate which would better facilitate a more rapid response would be of great assistance to help those who very well may get into trouble on our sometimes hostile "Tahoma." (Source: Excerpts from a report by Bob Martin, Ranger, Mount Rainier National Park)

## **AVALANCHE, WEATHER**

### **Washington, Mount Si**

On February 15, 1985, Brad Kingry (22) and Peter Vander Molen (27) were climbing near the top of the Haystack on Mt. Si. About 1400 Vander Molen was in the lead when a small avalanche swept him off and out of sight. Kingry felt the line tighten and called out, but there was no answer. he downclimbed, following the rope, and found Vander Molen with severe head injuries and bleeding. After calling for help and receiving no reply, Kingry descended to a residence and called the police. A rescue effort got underway, but Vander Molen had succumbed from his injuries. (Source: *Bergtrage*, Seattle Mountain Rescue Council, 85-03, March, 1985)

### **Analysis**

Forecasters for the Weather Service and U.S. Forest Service indicated that avalanche conditions were high as a result of a storm of heavy (wet) snow. (Source: *The Seattle Times*, February 11, 1985)