

The other lesson brought out is that of strategy of protection for the second climber, which the leader must consider as important as his own under certain climbing situations, such as this instance of both following on a downclimb and traversing at the same time. There was no solid rappel anchor to rappel from so we decided to downclimb the short ten meter section. The reason we did not continue the climb was a notice at the Lumpy Ridge parking area that stated the entrance gate would be locked and the area closed at 1800. While trying to get back to our car so we wouldn't be locked in, I was surprised to see a couple of other climbers still on the rock who seemed unconcerned about the closing time. When we finally did make it to the parking lot and our car, at 1850, we found the gate unlocked and there appeared no intention of locking it, as numerous other cars were still in the parking lot, indicating that others who probably were more familiar with the area knew that the gate was not going to be locked. (Source: Doug Grimm)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, LOOSE ROCK

Colorado, Pikes Peak

On August 30, 1986, Richard Andrews (42) was climbing a 15 meter pitch on Tenny Crags. He was belayed by his daughter (13). He was two to three meters above his last chock when he fell, pulling all protection and going all the way to the ground. He fractured his ankle and injured his spine. (Source: Skee Hipszky, El Paso County Search and Rescue)

Analysis

The rock here is extremely loose and weathered. It is doubtful that any protection would have held the fall. (Source: Skee Hipszky, El Paso County Search and Rescue)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY, PROTECTION PULLED OUT, NO HARD HAT, LOOSE ROCK

Colorado, Bear Creek Canyon

On October 26, 1986, two climbers with proper equipment, including seat harnesses, carabiners and pitons, were climbing in Bear Creek Canyon. The victim (18) was belaying the climber. Slack existed. Climber fell, stress caused victim to lose balance in standing belay. Victim fell, pulling piton out, dropping 18 meters, landing on head and back. (Source: David Niegocki, Fireman with Colorado Springs Fire Department)

(Editor's Note: We don't know what happened to the climber.)

OVERDUE CLIMBERS, FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE, INEXPERIENCE

Idaho, Mount Borah

On May 26, 1986, Glynda Miller (age unknown) and Geoff Lyons set out to climb Mount Borah. On May 27, Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue received a call from Don Miller to say that his ex-wife and her friend had gone either mountain climbing or caving and had not returned. Glynda Miller had left their daughter with a babysitter, but had not returned to pick up the child.

I learned Glynda Miller had been into climbing and caving since the first of the year. I know nothing of Geoff Lyons' background. I also learned the two had been taking either a climbing or caving class at Boise State University and that they went climbing or caving almost every week end.

I got in touch with the instructor at the University who suggested they may have gone to Papoose Cave (west central Idaho) or to Mount Borah and that the two were planning to attempt a Mount McKinley climb, possibly in July.

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue had a party on the mountain over that weekend so I got in touch with them to learn that on their way down they had seen a couple in their base camp around 0930 on May 26, getting ready for the climb. Our members noticed the "new" ice axes with price tags still on them.

As we prepared to get a team to go back to the mountain, Mr. Miller called to say the couple had called him from a place near the mountain. They were late getting up the mountain and took what they thought was a short cut back down. They traveled all night, "to avoid frostbite," and got off the mountain at 0500.

The two said they were okay except that Miller was suffering from snow blindness. I saw the two about a week later. Glynda Miller was apparently all right although she said her eyes were still a little sore. They did not comment on their climb. (Source: Larry Novak, Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue)

(Editor's Note: Of the many overdue climber reports received, most of which did not result in injury, this one illustrates what happens when no itinerary is filed with anyone. At least in this case if a search had been necessary, some clues were in place as to where the couple had started their climb.)

FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING UNROPED, PLACED NO PROTECTION

Montana, Mount Reynolds

On May 31, 1986, Charles Bauer (27) and his brother, Lary (18), were climbing a technical route on Mount Reynolds when they encountered a steep chute filled with snow. They attempted to climb above and around the chute but eventually decided they would have to cross the snow. With crampons and ice ax, Charles Bauer jumped out onto the snow field from a rock which was about two meters above the snow. Charles was unroped. On landing, he apparently lost his balance and slid uncontrolled for about 225 meters, sustaining fatal injuries in the incident. (Source: Charlie Logan, SAR Coordinator, Glacier National Park)

Analysis

Besides not being protected for such a maneuver, very few situations would seem to call for jumping a vertical distance of two meters from rock onto a steep, snow-filled chute. Far too much is given to luck. (Source: Charlie Logan, SAR Coordinator, Glacier National Park)

FALL ON ICE, ICE SCREWS PULLED OUT

New Hampshire, Mount Washington

On the morning of February 14, 1986, after spending the night at the Harvard Mountaineering Cabin, Rhode Island climbers Peter Barlow (29) and Steven Cournoyer (28) left