

were evacuated in a Navy helicopter. Continued danger from additional avalanches resulted in the search for the guide and the other client being called off by noon of July 4. The bodies were sighted on September 4 and extricated from the crevasse by September 6. They had obviously been crushed and deeply buried in the crevasse by the avalanche. (Source: From a report by Rich Murphy of the Bellingham Mountain Rescue Council)

### **Analysis**

The aftermath of this accident resulted in the usual amount of press coverage, some of it relating to the particulars of the accident, much of it having to do with the sport of mountaineering in general.

Kraabel did not have the permit required of firms hiring out as guides on Mount Baker. However, one of the guides who does have a permit is Dunham Gooding, director of the American Alpine Institute guide service. He said that route was a normal, generally safe way to scale Mount Baker, a prime training site for alpine climbers.

"Our climbers are in that area very frequently and we're familiar with the ice cliffs that dropped the debris (which triggered the avalanche)," Gooding said. "We know that those cliffs drop debris about three or four times a year in very small amounts, so the cliffs are unsafe maybe one minute each year."

Gooding added that the snowpack was relatively stable. However, it was noted by other climbing parties that had been camped lower on the glacier that throughout the night numerous ice avalanches had been heard coming from higher on the mountain, indicative of a freezing level that had remained quite high throughout the night.

These are the only pertinent facts we have on the conditions at the time of the accident. (Source: J. Williamson, gleaned from conversations, various issues of *The Seattle Times*, and the report by Rich Murphy of the Bellingham Mountain Rescue Council)

## **FALLING ROCK, INEXPERIENCE, POOR POSITION**

### **Washington, North Cascades**

On August 7, 1986, George Newberry, director of the National Outdoor Leadership School's (NOLS) Northwest Office, reported that Neal Bibbins (23) had been hit in the face with a rock.

While ascending fixed rope on a wide, shallow gully below Perfect Pass, rock fall started from a treed area adjacent to the route above Bibbins. Warning was shouted by observers from above. Bibbins looked up and appeared to be struck as he immediately tried to pivot and duck. A helmet and safe-belay had been used. Bibbins was approximately 15 meters from the bottom of the gully when struck. An instructor reached him in about one minute and immediately helped him back down out of the gully. Preliminary first aid was administered to puncture wounds of the face. Within 15 minutes, a move to secure camp for the night and the evacuation process for the next day was initiated. Assistant leader Marit Snow hiked out to Glacier Ranger Station and reported the accident to Newberry. Newberry requested permission to fly into the accident site and transport Bibbins to Baker Lake. Permission was granted. (Source: William Leiter, North Cascades National Park, and Jim Ferguson, NOLS leader)

### **Analysis**

The proper immediate response to rock fall must be stressed: Bibbins should not have looked when the warning was shouted. Injury might have been avoided if he had instead