

FALL ON ROCK, EXCEEDING ABILITIES, INADEQUATE BELAY**New Hampshire, White Horse Ledge**

On July 11, 1987, Jim Murray (30) was on the 5.7 variation of Standard on White Horse Ledge when he fell just after clipping into a bolt there. He dropped six meters before his belayer's Sticht Plate jammed. Murray broke his talus bone. (Source: Rick Wilcox, New Hampshire Mountain Rescue Service)

Editor's Note: This route is climbed hundreds of times per year. While there is no pattern to the accidents which occur on it, the frequency of mishaps has to do with its popularity and its attractiveness to beginning lead climbers.

FALL ON ICE, CLIMBING ALONE AND UNROPED, WEATHER**New Hampshire, Willey Slide**

On November 17, 1987, Brian Donleavy (20) was found near the base of Willey Slide by members of the New Hampshire Mountain Rescue Service. He had been reported missing by friends from the Dartmouth Outing Club. He had apparently fallen about 150 to 200 meters, either because he was hit by a chunk of ice or because he came out of his holds. (Source: New Hampshire Mountain Rescue Service)

Analysis

There are some points worth mentioning beyond the obvious factors of climbing alone in temperatures well above freezing and early in the ice-climbing season. This young man, who was President of the Dartmouth Mountaineering Club, was eager, intelligent, and brash. He wanted to get good at climbing fast. He was admired for his ability by fellow students, yet there was concern for his judgment expressed by some. He had broken his arm a year earlier and his leg during the summer prior to his death, both in rock-climbing situations. On the day of his fatal climb, his zest and enthusiasm clouded his judgment. Only his peers might have persuaded him not to attempt the climb, but they would have (1) had to know what he was setting out to do, and (2) have been as strong-willed as, or stronger-willed than, Donleavy to have convinced him. (Source: J. Williamson)

AVALANCHE**New York, Adirondack Mountains**

On March 21, 1987, Jean Grenon (30) and Paul Junique (30) were ice climbing in a couloir on Mount Colden when they were struck by an avalanche which carried them to the bottom. During the fall, Grenon's crampons caught on the ice, probably causing fractures of both his legs. (Source: Jean Grenon)

Analysis

This is one of very few winter climbing accident reports we've ever received from the Adirondacks. There are many couloirs which have been scraped down to rock because there is little topsoil and plenty of spring runoff. In winter, there is good ice

climbing, and the usual danger of small avalanches when snow builds up in and on top of the couloirs. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALLS ON ROCK

New York, Shawangunks

Of the 26 accidents which occurred from falls in this climbing area, most occurred to leaders. The three which happened to following climbers did not result in serious injury, but one could have, in that the young man (17) fell over 30 meters to the ground seconding Frog's Head (5.5). There was one fatality, one flail chest, two tension pneumothoraxes, 11 climbers with fractures, and a variety of less serious injuries. The climbs varied in difficulty from 5.3 to 5.11, the average age of the victims was 29, and all but four were males. Because of the length of most of the falls, it would seem that inadequate protection played a part in the contributory cause of the resulting injuries. One climber's fall was precipitated by wasp stings. There were more climbers than ever this year, with an average of 500 per weekend during the peak seasons.

On October 31, 1987, Peter Sajovic (42) and John Thackray (52) were on their way down to a rappel point after a climb when Sajovic lost his footing about six meters from the top of the cliff. He fell 30 meters to his death, landing in a rock crevice. They were roped together at the time, and because Thackray fell on the other side of a tree from Sajovic, and because a branch snagged the rope, he only went 10 or 12 meters. He suffered fractured ribs and a pneumothorax. Both were experienced climbers. (Source: Tom Scheuer, Senior Ranger, Mohonk Preserve, and J. Williamson)

FALL ON SNOW, FALL INTO CREVASSE, WEATHER

Oregon, Mount Hood

On July 11, 1987, at 0400, Arthur Anderson (59), Elmer Parrott (40) and Robert Cooke (30) left Timberline Lodge to start their ascent to the summit of Mount Hood. Being the most experienced climber of the three, Parrott took the lead. Cooke was positioned in the middle, with Anderson at the end. They maintained their positions throughout most of the climb, with ten meters of rope between them.

The three reached the summit at 1300 and because of a continuing warming trend, immediately started back down the same route. An hour later, they reached an area above the Bergschrund Crevasse at 3350 meters. They were in the process of making their way across the top and around the east side of the crevasse when Anderson lost his footing and slid past Cooke. At first, Cooke and Parrott managed to maintain a somewhat controlled slide. As they gained speed they lost control, were pulled downward, and tumbled head over heels over the top of the ridge into the crevasse.

Cooke landed on a ledge about three meters from the top of the crevasse and was knocked unconscious. Parrott and Anderson landed on a ledge about two meters from the top. After a few minutes, Cooke regained consciousness and crawled to the other two climbers. He found that Parrott appeared to have been seriously injured and could find no vital life signs in Anderson.