

The third member of the roped team attempted to plunge step directly down the 45-degree hardened snow slope. He was wearing crampons. He lost control and began cartwheeling, pulling McNeill, the center climber, into a toilet-bowl-sized rock. This resulted in a severe fracture of the left tibia and fibula. The first on the rope arrested the fall. The three were then joined by two other members of the party and other climbers from the area who assisted in medical evaluation and treatment. McNeill was rescued by helicopter. (Source: Gene Griswold, designated climbing leader)

### **Analysis**

A careful and complete evaluation of the route and its hazards, and of members' abilities, must be made prior to travel. Better communications and a consensus were in order here prior to making a commitment to the technique for the descent. (Source: Gene Griswold)

*Editor's Note: Plunge-stepping with crampons on, especially on this kind of snow, is not recommended.*

## **FAULTY USE OF CRAMPONS, LOSS OF CONTROL—VOLUNTARY GLISSADE**

### **Washington, Mount Rainier**

This report was sent in by Lilly Tuholske (29), who was climbing Mount Rainier with five friends on June 15, 1987, when this accident occurred.

On descent, I really wanted to glissade. I was unable to go on the summit attempt the previous day. We felt it would have been too much, given my five month-pregnancy. We were descending on fairly hard snow. Jack (Tuholske) called up to me, knowing I wanted to glissade, and said he thought I was in a good spot for a quick slide. I had a momentary hesitation and then decided, "Why not?" I sat down and started without removing my crampons. I caught my foot about three seconds into the glissade. The downward force and weight of my pack caused me to flip and break my left fibula. I was fortunately able to arrest (after three tries) several seconds later. (Source: Lilly Tuholske)

### **Analysis**

Never take an unnecessary risk. At the minimum it can result in incredible inconvenience for others. Also, crampons and glissading don't mix. (Source: Lilly Tuholske)

## **FALLING ROCK**

### **Washington, Snoqualmie Pass**

On June 24, 1987, my partner and I (48) had climbed 50 meters of a Class 4 chimney of Chair Peak. Then we came to an easy section. I coiled the rope around my neck and started to angle up. Just as I got directly below her, she shouted,