

some value, but was unavailable. During the hoist into the helicopter, he suffered a flash superficial freezing of both hands since his ungloved hands were exposed to rotor wash of over 100 kph and temperature was -24 degrees C.

On examination in Talkeetna, the patient could walk with difficulty, both legs were spastic, and reflexes were hyperactive. Bilateral ankle clonus was also present. By the time he left the hospital a few days later, he was making good progress with walking rehabilitation training, his frostbite was healing, and he was able to go back to his job as a letter carrier in New Jersey a month later. (Source: Dr. Peter Hackett, Director, Denali Medical Research Project)

AVALANCHE, POOR POSITION

Alaska, Mount McKinley

On June 1, 1988, the four man Italian "Valmalenco Expedition" departed the Southeast Fork of the Kahiltna to traverse over Kahiltna Pass in an attempt of the Wickersham Wall. On June 4 they proceeded over Peak 3270 meters and down the north ridge dropping 150 meters. From here all four proceeded off the ridge to the west another 30 meters. At this point, Giancarlo Lenatti skied down another 250 meters to 2780 meters in order to observe a safe descent route. Just after he stopped, around 1600, the slope where the other three stood avalanched toward the west into the upper Peters Basin. The crownline spanned approximately 200 meters with a depth of 1.2 to 1.5 meters. It ran over 200 meters stopping in the upper Peters Basin. At the time of the avalanche, all four members were unroped and on skis. Floriano Lenatti and Roberto Dioli were caught and swept out of the debris along the north side of the run. The fourth member, Marco Pedrolini, was taken down the entire avalanche path where he was swept into a crevasse. The major portion of avalanche debris swept over Pedrolini. Pedrolini was left unhurt and only partially buried. He was able to extricate himself from the crevasse. The group lost most of their gear in the slide. All four proceeded back up over Peak 3270 meters, continuing down the Southeast Fork where they flew back to Talkeetna on June 5. (Source: Roger Robinson, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

Analysis

Considering this season's excessive snow fall and the preceeding heavy snow storm of June 2, this descent route was a poor choice. The Italian party was advised of this season's excessive snow fall and the extreme avalanche conditions that exist throughout the range. (Source: Roger Robinson, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

AVALANCHE

Alaska, Mount Blackburn

On June 16, 1988, a Japanese climbing party of four, led by Yoichi Tadokoro (44) were at the 3200 meter level on the Northwest Ridge of Mount Blackburn when two members were struck after they had traversed about 100 meters. They were carried down to the 2200 meter level. Toshiaki Masuko (30) was killed, and Shideo Ogawa (49) was buried. Todakoro and his roped partner, Shigeru Yamaya, were not caught,

and walked out by June 22 and reported the accident to the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park rangers. (Source: Conversation with Sadao Tambe)

(Editor's Note: The same excessive snow conditions mentioned in the previous analysis affected this part of the range as well.)

STRANDED, CLIMBING ALONE AND UNROPED

Arizona, Capitol Butte

On January 7, 1988, Richard Mullen (30s), visiting from Oregon where he lived, decided to climb, alone, the standard South Face Ducked Route of Capitol Butte. The climb is steep and over 1200 meters in vertical relief. The route follows numerous ledges over broken sandstone and is sometimes difficult to follow. By the time he had made the very strenuous climb, it was getting dark, which complicated matters. At the top now in falling temperatures, he decided to try and make his way down with no light. After some difficulty and a near fall on slippery rock to his inevitable death, he became stranded. Rescuers were called when "yells for help" were reported by locals.

A rescue team was assembled and started up the mountain at nightfall taking almost four hours to reach the summit with heavy packs. One paramedic fell and broke several ribs while descending. The victim was located with little problem and he was able to walk out under his own power. The rescue took the entire evening until morning. (Source: Reed Thorne, Captain—Technical Rescue, Sedona Fire Department)

STRANDED, EXCEEDING ABILITIES, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, CLIMBING ALONE

Arizona, Wilson Canyon

On February 25, 1988, Damien Glassy (30s) had ascended the standard Wilson Mountain Trail (south) to the summit of Wilson Mountain by himself. He had on minimal clothing, tennis type shoes, and a day pack with a climbing rope and harness, "Just in case the going got rough!" He also had a survival blanket and some water. Apparently, he reached the summit and decided to descend by a less traveled route. Traveling south, he reached a wash which he assumed would lead him down. He finally reached terrain which allowed use of his rope for descending on rappel. After each rappel he retrieved his rope and continued on down. Eventually he reached a drop of more than 125 meters. Having only enough rope for a descent of 20 meters at a time, and unable to climb out of what he had just come down, Damien found himself stranded on a one meter plus-wide ledge. Rescuers arrived just before sunset having been alerted by a passer-by who heard "screams from a vertical sheer face." Rescue team members finally were able to get below Damien at nightfall and established voice contact. After learning from him that he had, indeed, come down from the top, and after careful consideration of the more than 150 meters vertical free-climb that separated them, the rescue operation was changed to a top access evacuation. A single rescuer was lowered vertically to Damien's position and both were hauled out using conventional raising systems and a very long rope! Damien had less than a year of mountaineering experience and had purchased the rope and harness only a month