

out to Talkeetna. He went to Anchorage for x-rays for a possible fractured ankle and foot. (Source: Ralph Moore, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

Analysis

This is a good example of an effective self-rescue by a competent party. (Source: Ralph Moore, Mountaineering Ranger, Denali National Park)

FALL ON ROCK, FREE-SOLO, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

California, Joshua Tree National Monument

On February 20, 1989, a friend and I (33) made a one day trip to Joshua Tree. After leading three climbs rated 5.9 or better, I led the roof of "Hobbit Roof." After going over cleanly, I belayed my partner through. Upon walking down the backside, I decided to do the route again, free-solo. I had done this climb many times, and had done the same three weeks previously and it was a rewarding end to a fun day of climbing.

This time, I jumped in before a climber had readied himself to lead the route. I made it over the roof and missed a hand jam and slipped out of a crack. The entire impact was taken by my right foot and I shattered my right heel. Nearby climbers ran to my assistance. My partner drove me to High Desert Medical Center. I was treated and released by my own doctor. (Source: Brad Berdoy)

Analysis

I have been leading technical rock for eight years. I'm comfortable leading 5.8 and 5.9 and have done some 5.10. I have free-soloed in the past and enjoy bouldering.

But I find it hard to evaluate my maximum ability when it comes to a no-falls situation. I had no right to think that because I've done it before I can do it every time. I have fallen on lead in the past and it has put me in the hospital, so I've realized the dangers before. But the love of the moment has pulled me into this situation time and time again. After four to six months of treatment, I hope to climb again. I don't know if I'll free-solo again, but I will have to watch exceeding my abilities at all times and start having a safer attitude toward climbing. (Source: Brad Berdoy)

FALLING ROCK, "SLED RIDE" DOWN SNOW, CLIMBING ALONE, DISTRACTION

California, Mount Shasta

I was on the second day of a planned four-day ascent of Green Butte Ridge (to include a night on top) of Mount Shasta on May 8, 1989. I was alone and about 3450 meters up. I stepped on the icy top edge of a rock slab as big as the roof of a car, one foot (30 cm) thick. It shot down the snow and ice with me on it, my right leg being pulled underneath it, for about a meter or so when it crunched to a dead halt against another boulder, shattering between them my right tibia and fibula a few inches (7 cm) below the knee, trapping my leg.

I was concerned that the slab could move again and it could get worse for me, or I would bleed to death, or go into shock from the pain, so I frantically exhausted myself twice trying to move either rock. In spite of the pain I had to laugh at myself and the immense absurdity of my position. Eventually I contorted myself into position to grab my gaiter with both