

including some steeper snow walking. The Trap Dike was a more difficult climb than she had attempted before, but her strong performance on even the steeper pitches of the lower sections led the rest of the party to believe that she would have no trouble on the lower angle slides above. Exactly what precipitated her fall is not known, but it could have been anything from a crampon catching on a leg to a step giving way. What role relative inexperience played in the fall can therefore not be determined, nor is it possible to speculate whether she could have self-arrested had she been carrying her ice ax at the time.

This group was a typical mix of relatively experienced climbers. Likely any of the four others could have functioned as the leader; but, as so often happens, none felt that he had been so designated or that it was even appropriate to take charge of others of similar experience. The result was that the decision to allow Hepburn to continue was made incrementally and without any one individual taking responsibility to make sure that she was able to handle the terrain and conditions.

As a general rule, a party should rope whenever a slip could result in serious injury or death. Taking this rule literally, one should rope up on the west side of Saddleback. That isn't done because the actual danger of a fall is low enough. The danger of a fall on the Bottle Slide on Giant is greater, but still one does not usually use a rope.

The Trap Dike and the slides on Colden in the winter, especially with glazed surface conditions, is terrain obviously much closer to the point where a rope would be an absolute requirement. For inexperienced members of a party, a rope becomes a requirement before it does for experienced members; it is the leader of the group who must make that decision. In this case, there was no clearly defined leader. Hence, no clear decision was made that since the party had no climbing rope, Hepburn should not be allowed to continue past the upper waterfall. (Source: *Adirondac*, Vol. 53, No.5, June 1989)

VARIOUS FALLS ON ROCK, MOSTLY NO OR INADEQUATE PROTECTION

New York, Shawangunks

In 1989, there were 19 climbing accidents. They can be divided into three categories: (1) solo climbers or boulderers, who use no rope; (2) lead climbers; and (3) those climbers being seconded. The great majority of climbing accidents involve lead climbers. Of these, seven leaders fell, and either pulled protection or had placed none, and hit either the ground or a ledge. Six accidents involved a leader falling a moderate distance, six meters or less, with protection holding yet an injury resulting.

Perhaps the most interesting category of injuries is those that happened to climbers coming second. Seconding is usually considered to be relatively safe, so injuries here are notable. All three injuries in this category occurred for different reasons: a loose rock, a shoulder prone to dislocation being stressed, and a climber coming second whose rope appears to have jammed and he was not aware until he fell; and then there was just too much slack in his rope and he fell two or three meters. (Source: Mohonk Preserve)