

Both survived the fall and the night, but in the morning the one who fell originally was in critical condition. His partner crawled to him to anchor him to rocks and adjust his position, but despite his efforts, the first one died around noon that day. Around 1430, a wet snow avalanche carried his body another 50 meters down the gully, while the survivor managed to hang on to rocks and avoid further injury.

The climbers had registered with the Banff Warden Service and became overdue the next morning. Soon after that, the survivor was rescued and his friend's body recovered.

Analysis

It is not known why the first climber fell initially. His partner was fortunate to be able to arrest the fall, and it is thought that the rope dragging through snow runnels may have helped him. Other than belaying, moving together with only a meter of rope between them or continuing to rappel may have prevented serious injury during a fall. (Source: Marc Ledwidge, Warden Service, Banff National Park)

SLIP ON SCREE AND ROCK, UNPROTECTED

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mount Temple

On August 13, 1990, a lone climber was descending the "tourist route" on Mount Temple. It is speculated that he went slightly off route at the grey cliff band where the scree trails branch off in various directions, slipped on scree overlying bedrock, and fell down cliffs approximately 65 meters. Another party later discovered his body and reported to the Banff Warden Service. They evacuated the body the same day.

Analysis

Although this is a fairly easy descent route, it requires knowledge of route-finding skills through dangerous terrain. (Source: Marc Ledwidge, Warden Service, Banff National Park)

FALL INTO CREVASSE, UNROPE

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mount White Pyramid

Early in February, 1990, ten members of the ACC Calgary Section set off to try a winter ascent of White Pyramid (3277 meters) from the north. On February 4, they left their camp by a small lake just north of the mountain, and proceeded to ski up the valley and moraines to gain its west ridge above the Epaulette Col. When the group reached the highest skiable point, six of its members, including the leader, turned back because of bad visibility, strong wind, and cold, while the other four took one rope, removed their skis, and climbed up steep snow to the ridge.

At that point Hans, who was carrying the rope, decided to stop and find shelter. The remaining three continued up the ridge toward the summit, spaced about 50 meters apart. When Frank, who was second, reached the base of the steep final slope, he could no longer see Russ ahead of him. Looking around, he spotted a meter wide hole in the snow a short distance back. Russ had fallen into some kind of crevasse. Frank shouted for him, and got a response from the depths. When the third man, Peter, arrived, he belayed Frank on slings to the edge of the crevasse to help Russ climb out. Russ had a deep gash over his eyebrow from smashing into the far side of the hole as he fell in, and blood was flowing from it, over his face, beard, and wind suit.