

conditions were marginal on the peak, and that overnight gear was highly recommended for winter attempts. Swinnerton and Pyatt continued on to attempt Kiener's Route. Slowed by the marginal ice/snow conditions and caught in the storm, they traversed over to the top of the Notch Couloir and spent a brutal night without bivouac gear. Unfamiliar with the descent, they ended up in Glacier Gorge where they were found.

Analysis

Swinnerton and Pyatt sustained minor cold injuries but the results could have been much worse. They did not have adequate clothing or shelter for the conditions. A map and compass and the knowledge of how to put them to good use should also be part of the climber's equipment selection. A search costing several thousand dollars was necessary to solve this particular incident. It included sending out ground searchers and a helicopter into the storm. (Source: Rocky Mountain National Park Rangers)

FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

Colorado, Boulder Canyon

On February 9, Gary Wheeler (33) fell 15 meters and slid another 30 meters, landing at the base of a waterfall and against a tree.

Wheeler had climbed the waterfall, tied a rope around a tree, and walked down a dirt path to give his partner the one pair of crampons they had. The partner fell several times trying to climb the waterfall, so Wheeler went up the dirt path to adjust the rope. He slipped when he went to adjust the rope. (Source: *The Denver Post*, February 10, 1990)

(Editor's Note: According to Dixon Hutchinson, leader of the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, this was the first ice climbing death in the area in ten years. One or two die rock climbing in boulder Canyon every year, but not all of these are climbers.)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT

Colorado, Longs Peak

On April 15, Randy Joseph (33) fell suddenly and without warning during a lead on Longs Peak of Alexander's Chimney. Conditions were mixed thin ice and bare rock, with protection mostly rock devices. Joseph had removed his crampons for a short stretch. He fell about ten meters, pulling out a stopper. Joseph sustained a fractured fibula and displaced tibia on his left leg. His belayer, Jim Scott, assisted him in rappelling three pitches to Lamb's Slide and in struggling to Chasm Lake. While Scott went for help, Joseph crawled to the Chasm Meadows Cabin. Rangers met Joseph at the cabin, and he was flown out from Chasm Meadows on the following morning. (Source: Rocky Mountain National Park Rangers)

Analysis

Joseph is a highly skilled climber and former Longs Peak ranger. His efforts in getting from the climb to the cabin with a painful injury in winter conditions are quite noteworthy. Mixed climbs on large alpine peaks in winter conditions are inherently dangerous. This is an example of a team which was prepared for, and effectively dealt with, an emergency which could have ended up in a fatality for a less qualified team. (Source: Rocky Mountain National Park Rangers)