

Glacier, topping out at 1600. Possibly a more significant factor here was that they did not research the descent routes and did not have a map and compass. They had concentrated on finding out all they could about the approach (even the shortcuts) and the route with its alternatives. After they topped out, they thought they could descend Thatchtop but got cliffed out and benighted. (Source: Rocky Mountain National Park Rangers)

*(Editor's Note: According to David Essex, Chief Park Ranger, the STRANDED and OVERDUE missions in Rocky Mountain National Park were high this year. Three such situations, two of which resulted in fatality, involved scramblers on fairly serious peaks.*

*Also of note in Colorado were the four avalanche fatalities involving skiers, one of whom was snow boarding. A fifth avalanche accident involved a narrow escape when a solo back country skier, Dakars Gowans (44), was carried a hundred meters down a 37 degree slope into some trees. He was able to crawl back to Lindley Flat, where his friends effected a rescue.*

*During the past 39 years, according to the Denver Post, 107 people have died in Colorado avalanches. Most of these are probably ski related.)*

## **FALL ON ROCK, NO HARD HAT**

### **Idaho, City of Rocks**

On June 25, Tim Herron (early 30s) fell about five meters from Dire Straights. He was held by his rope, but he struck his head. He was lowered to a rock formation below, unconscious and having convulsions. He was evacuated and flown to Pocatello. He died on August 4. (Source: Idaho State Parks and Recreation Accident/Incident Form)

*(Editor's Note: This park has become a very popular climbing area. Very few accidents are reported. The ratio of serious injury/fatality to climber days is indicative of the level of expertise which assembles here.)*

## **FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING ALONE, LOSS OF SKI POLE BASKETS— THEN SKI POLES, STARVATION**

### **Idaho, Mount Borah**

In early September, Paul Kovatch (40) began his attempt of Mount Borah. This was his seventh try, and nearly ended his goal of reaching the highest point in each state. Here is a portion of the report he sent:

Dear Sirs of the Accident Booklet:

Were I to give the accident a heading, it would be something like Climbing Alone, Equipment Failure, Loss of Ski Poles, Starvation. The equipment failure was the loss the day before my fall of the round "basket" around the lower part of one of the ski poles. Without that "basket" I couldn't lean on both poles on that 45 degree snowfield. That made the accident almost inevitable. I was coming out of a fairly long, even steeper gully/ chimney, and at first the less steep snow was a relief. Precisely at the base of the snowfield was where the mountain became permanently less steep. For reasons I can't