

nice onto the summit ridge when Doug, the leader, ran out of protection for a belay. They agreed to move together with the protection of their immediate placements, and Mike unclipped from the lower station. While digging through the cornice, Doug dislodged a large snow block, which went down the gully and struck Mike. He fell about five meters and injured his leg before Doug stopped him. Both climbers then struggled to the top of the gully and up the ice cap to the summit. Part way down the descent, Mike felt he could not continue, so Doug left him and went on alone for help. He contacted the Banff Park Warden Service in Lake Louise at 2400, and a rescue plan was made for the morning. At daylight, the victim was found, stabilized, and slung out by helicopter to an ambulance waiting at Moraine Lake. He was found to have a fractured fibula. (Source: Banff National Park Warden Service)

Analysis

The two were experienced mountaineers; however, they chose the wrong gully to reach the summit ridge. Bad weather, causing poor visibility, may have been a factor. The correct gully, right of the one they ascended, may have been easier.

It appears that Mike's leg was broken in the fall, rather than by the snow block. An initial free fall on slack rope places a greater load on the belayer. They are both lucky that Doug was able to hold it from his precarious position. (Source: Orvel Miskiwi)

CORNICE COLLAPSE, UNROPED, BAD WEATHER, OFF ROUTE AT NIGHT

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mount Temple

On September 12, 1992, James H. (38) and Charles B. (30) met at Moraine Lake to climb the East Ridge of Mount Temple. They set off at 1300, intending to bivouac above the Big Step and finish the climb the following day. They bivvied as planned and resumed the climb at 0800 on September 13. Early snows had encased the mountain in winter conditions, making the climbing slow and difficult, so that the climbers did not reach the summit until 0400 September 14. Due to blizzard conditions, they started down from the summit right away, but unfortunately went the wrong way, taking a rib that led them toward the north face rather than the northeast ridge, the normal descent route. They started out roped up, but soon dispensed with the rope as the traveling appeared to be straightforward. Both continued to wear their crampons over the snow and rock. James slipped and fell into a cornice. It collapsed and he slipped over the edge.

Charles looked for James for a while, but could not spot him, so he resumed the descent to get help. As it was getting light, he then realized that he was on the wrong ridge, so he crossed over to the correct one and continued. By that time, the climbers were overdue, and National Parks Wardens had commenced a search. Charles was picked up by helicopter and evacuated to Moraine Lake at 0800. The search team later spotted James' body at the bottom of the north face of Mount Temple. The cornice which had collapsed under him was right at its apex. The body was slung out to Lake Louise later that morning.

Analysis

James was an experienced mountaineer with many winter ascents, and both climbers were well prepared. But both were fatigued after some 20 hours of continuous climbing, and James was not wearing his prescription glasses due to blowing snow and the cold,

whereas he had previously always worn them. Bad weather and the darkness may have also contributed to the wrong choice of route for the descent. (Source: Banff National Park Warden Service)

SLIP ON SNOW, UNROPED, HASTE

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Three Sisters, Big Sister

About 1315 on September 30, 1992, Richard O. and Jim B. were hurrying upward in strong winds on the southwest slopes of the third Sister (2937 meters) when Richard slipped on a small patch of snow and fell about six meters. He sustained injuries suspected to be a broken left leg and right ankle. Jim tried to help Richard down the mountain, but his injuries were too severe. Jim made him as comfortable as possible and went down alone for help. He reached the Spray Lakes Ranger Station at 1430.

Rangers from Bow Valley and Peter Lougheed Provincial Parks were soon transported to the accident site by a unit from Canmore Helicopters, using the sling method. They treated Richard, immobilized his injuries, and then slung him down to an ambulance waiting at the road.

Analysis

Rangers determined from discussion with the climbers that they seemed overconfident and were moving fast, perhaps too fast. The strong wind blowing at the time also contributed to the accident. Use of a rope in exposed or tricky sections may have averted the accident, while costing them little more time. This is the first accident reported on a route described in a new guide book of mountain scrambles. Scramblers need to read the fine print in this book and appropriately evaluate their choice of route. (Source: George Field, Alpine Specialist, Peter Lougheed Provincial Park)

RAPPEL ANCHOR FAILURE, FALL ON ICE

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Tangle Ridge, Centre Stage Falls

Around mid-day on November 26, 1992, Pat S., who was a Park Warden, Mountain Guide, and Public Safety instructor with the Canadian Parks Service in Jasper National Park, and Lisa P., a warden from Banff National Park, left their vehicle to hike in to an ice climb on the west slope of Tangle Ridge, about 100 kilometers south of Jasper. Their objective was a 50 meter sheet of ice known as "Centre Stage." They were out for an easy recreational climb on their day off and Lisa's first attempt at waterfall ice.

After bushwhacking to reach the ice, the ascent was made routinely, and Pat lowered Lisa along the north side of the climb from a three-point anchor. Then he moved across to the south side of the ice to set up an anchor for which he used a single 30 centimeter piece of conduit. Lisa saw the ropes come down from the top, although Pat was out of sight on an upper step of the formation, about 50 meters above her. Seconds after the rappel ropes dropped, she saw Pat fall to the base of the climb. She assessed his injuries and used a radio from his pack to alert the Jasper Park Warden Office to the situation. At 1550, wardens at the nearby Sunwapta Station monitored her call and began to respond. The initial report of the victim's injuries included a broken femur, a head injury, cracked ribs, and a fractured wrist, but while the closest rescue party was still *en route*, the report changed: first to difficulty breathing, then to loss of consciousness, then lack of pulse. Lisa began CPR immediately and maintained her efforts for