

to locate Bishops Terrace. Kramer only had a short period of time to climb that afternoon, as he was expected at work at 1530. While looking for the Terrace, Kramer came across Serenity Crack. He stated: "I was running out of time and wanted to climb badly. The crack looked fairly easy so I decided to try it. I climbed up to the first bolt and then came back down because none of my pro would fit. I was running out of time to climb so I said the hell with it and started climbing again. I clipped the first bolt and was almost to the second, within five inches, when my feet started to slip. I yelled for my partner to catch me as I started to slide down on my knees and hands. I could see my partner below me all ready to catch me, but I hit the ground before the rope tightened up." Kramer's partner, Alan Carrey, ran for help to the Ahwahnee where he phoned 911. Kramer was evacuated by park rangers. He had sustained a closed fracture of the tibia and fibula. (Source: John Dill, SAR Ranger, Yosemite National Park)

STRANDED, INADEQUATE CLOTHING, WEATHER

California, Yosemite National Park, Stately Pleasure Dome

On July 14, 1992, Gary Damsley (23) and Allyson Pendleton (29) became stranded during a rain storm they experienced one pitch from the top of South Crack. They became too cold to climb and had to be rescued. (Source: Fred Koegler, Ranger, Yosemite National Park)

Analysis

They did not have warm clothing or rain gear with them, and were not aware of the changing weather. This incident nearly parallels the one reported on June 24, only these climbers are from California, not Ireland, and so might have been expected to be more aware of potential weather conditions. (Source: Jed Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, NO SPOTTER

California, Yosemite Valley, Swan Slab

On July 23, 1992, Michael Poulin fell about eight feet to the ground while bouldering in the Swan Slab area. He sustained a severely angulated right ankle fracture. (Source: C. Jacobi, Ranger, Yosemite National Park)

(Editor's Note: Many injuries could be prevented if proper spotting techniques were used while bouldering—provided the climber is no more than six or eight feet above the spotter.)

FALL TO GROUND ON RAPPEL, INADEQUATE BELAY, NO HARD HAT

California, Yosemite National Park, Puppy Dome

On July 24, 1992, Mike James (22) and his fellow counselor from a Seventh Day Adventist Camp (Camp Wawona) had set up a rappel on "Do or Fly," an overhanging climb on Puppy Dome. The intent was to teach students to trust each other by having one student rappel "hands-off" (no attempt to brake) while a second student, at the bottom, stops the rappeller by pulling on the rope. James rappelled, but was not stopped before hitting the ground head first. The tension on the rope then bungied him back up, suspending him off the ground. He was evacuated by ranger to Yosemite Medical Clinic.

Analysis

Interviews with the victim's party revealed that they were rappelling young members of the group on dynamic rope, allowing them to "bounce" on the stretch of the rope. James was rappelling and the person maintaining tension with a belay device neglected to compensate for the difference in weight between James' adult stature and that of the students'. James fell, the stretch in the rope allowing him to strike the talus at the base of the wall. James was not wearing a helmet at the time of the fall, supposedly because there were not enough for the group, although not all of the group were at the summit or participating at the base in any fashion so as to require a helmet. (Source: K. L. O'Connor-Henry, Ranger, Yosemite National Park)

(Editor's Note: Here is an example of a school/camp using climbing as a vehicle for personal growth. While we must count such incidents as part of the climbing accident data, it should be noted that the individuals involved are not climbers.)

FALL ON ICE, PLACED NO PROTECTION, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

California, Dana Glacier

On July 26, 1992, at 1515 Ranger Dave Page received a report of a climbing accident on the Dana Glacier. The reporting party, Robert Gordon, was at the Tioga Pass Entrance Station. Gordon indicated that two individuals climbing above him on the Dana Glacier had taken a 500 foot fall and that one of the individuals was seriously injured. Dana Glacier is outside the park boundary and Mono County Sheriff was called and notified of the incident. At that time I informed Sargent Cole Hampton that the park helicopter and personnel were available to respond if Mono County requested our assistance. Sargent Cole requested that we respond and asked that we keep him informed of what was happening.

Richard Vance was leading the climb up the ice gully on the Dana Glacier when his climbing partner, Joel Johnson, lost his footing and fell. Vance and Johnson were roped together and Vance had not put in any protection. Vance had no ice protection, only rock protection which he felt was useless in the rocks at the sides of the gully. Johnson gave no warning when he fell and pulled Vance down with him. Vance made an attempt at self-arrest but it was useless on the ice. Both climbers fell approximately 500 feet clearing the bergschrund in the process. Vance and Johnson came to rest on mixed snow and talus at approximately 11,700 feet. Vance was uninjured and indicated that Johnson had lost consciousness for about one minute and he remained disoriented for approximately ten minutes. Vance placed Johnson on a thermarest pad and put a sleeping bag over him to keep him warm. Both climbers were wearing helmets; however, Vance lost his during the fall. Robert Gordon, who was climbing below Vance and Johnson, hiked out to Tioga Pass and reported the accident to rangers.

Rangers from Tuolumne Meadows were flown in to the victim's location by the park helicopter. Johnson was hypothermic and Rangers Eric Gabriel and Dave Page began rewarming the patient and stabilizing him for transport. Johnson was to be short hauled to Dana Meadows by the park helicopter but severe down drafts prevented this from occurring. After some difficulty the helicopter was able to set down approximately 100 yards from the victim. The victim was then belayed down in the litter by rescue team members over treacherous terrain to the helicopter. The litter belay took approximately an hour to complete. Johnson was then loaded on the helicopter and flown to Dana Mead-