

asked to be allowed to down climb. He simply lost his footing, rotated on the rope—which held him—and collided with the rock, hitting his helmeted head so that he was momentarily unconscious.

This area is seeing an increase in climbing activity. Approaching the climbs from the bottom, one must go along the side of I-80 for about a quarter of a mile, walking on a cement barricade, as the wind from 18 wheelers pushes one toward the dense shrubs inland. Many climbers hike the trail and then rappel down from the top because of this.)

FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING UNROPED, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

Massachusetts, Chapelbrook Reservation, Chapel Ledges

On August 10, Pam Chavis (25) fell 75 feet from Chapel Ledges, where she was attempting her first free-solo climb. She had reached for a handhold, shifted some of her weight to that hand, then slipped. She got away with one leg fractured and one broken ankle.

Analysis

Pam Chavis had little climbing experience, and this was only her second time at this particular site. The newspaper report quoted her as saying, "I'm not going to let that rock get the best of me." So it is presumed she'll climb there again—but hopefully not with "an attitude." (Sources: Jed Williamson and an article by Jacqueline Walsh in the August 20, 1995, *Springfield Republican*)

FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE PROTECTION

Montana, Hyalite Canyon, Mummy II Route

On November 30, Stefan Mitrovich (26) and Rob (19) were climbing the Mummy's second pitch (150 feet, 3+/-). Stefan led out the initial 100 foot, 70° slope with one placement (a titanium and Snarg screw equalized) just below the final steep curtain. Five to ten feet from the top, Stefan paused to reattach a crampon to his boot and figure out the next sequence of moves. After several minutes passed, his two ice tools popped out and the surrounding ice fractured. During his 30-45 foot fall, with stretch from his single 8.8 mm rope, the crampons, tools, and helmet fell off him. Fortunately, the fall caused no serious injury (a bruised elbow). Stefan was able to hike out by himself.

Analysis

The season had just begun and the ice was thin and extremely brittle near the top. A leader should have been questioned. My partner, Chris Lhost, and I had suggested setting a top rope, to test the quality of the climb. Three things should have been looked at: (1) After experiencing difficulties with his (SM) crampons and with the brittle nature of the climb, lowering off should have been an option. (2) Leading with one 8.8 mm rope added, through the stretch, to the length of the fall. This positioned him closer to rock outcrops. One 10.5 mm or two 8.8 mm ropes would have been better. (3) Leading out a great length little with or no protection could have led to a more distant, drastic fall.

In addition, there were several other ice climbing accidents that happened this year, from classic leader falls, protection failing due to "yo yo" style leading to attain a higher point, and to one person jumping off a climb (15 feet) because her rope did not touch the ground. The latter, after breaking an ankle and her tibia, did not know the possible effects of what a fall with a crampon on can do! (Source: John Gallagher)