

ice at the very top of the final pitch. When he was about three feet from the trees and easy ground, his tools pulled out. He fell and was caught by his next ice screw, a small Black Diamond. Because the talus bone in his ankle was broken, he set up an anchor and his partner, Brian Donelan (37), led on to the top. Brian helped Fred to the top and Fred then mainly crawled to their truck, taking about four-and-a-half hours for the descent.

### **Analysis**

Fred thinks that there may have been a bulge of ice under the handle of his ice tool and he may have levered the tool out because of that.

I have been in either the same place or in a similar place and have thrown a weight on the end of a long cord (17 feet of 7mm perlon) around a small tree at the top of the cliff. After tying the ends of the cord together, I had protection for the final few feet. The end of a haul line or one of two double ropes would work even better, since the leader could have a top rope belay. A few carabiners make a good weight for throwing; a third tool would be used to weight the rope since it might hook something solid even if it did not fall neatly around a tree.

Under some conditions rappelling the route rather than climbing a poorly formed final pitch would be wise. In this case, the two men discussed that option after the accident and decided against it, since the talus slope was not yet filled in with snow and because they were climbing with only one rope. (Source: George Hurley)

## **VARIOUS: FALLS ON ROCK, FALLING ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT, INADEQUATE BELAYS, STRANDED, BEES**

### **New York, Mohonk Preserve, Shawangunks**

Of the 28 accidents reported from the Shawangunks in 1995, 17 were the result of falling, and in three cases, protection pulled out. The serious injuries included eleven fractures and one dislocation. There were two cases where the rappel rope did not reach the ground, and in one, the person rappelling unclipped and started to down climb when he found that his rappel rope did not reach the ground. He dislocated his shoulder when he fell. A man rappelling from Shockley's ceiling had to be rescued because he became stranded where the rope ended. Another fellow became stranded when he got stuck on Modern Times (5.8) and tried to prussik. His rope jammed, so he could not move.

There were six instances of falling rock, two of which were the result of climbers pulling a block of rock off. (A massive spontaneous rock fall was discovered in the Near traps days after it occurred.)

There was only one formal report of a bee attack, and that was on Classic (5.7). The climber got about 50 stings, but he did not fall or jump, and was all right. The rangers report that every year there are a number of accidents that go unreported because the injured person walks off or self-rescues. Yellow jacket and wasp attacks are common, but most go unreported.

The average age of the victims was 27, and the average difficulty of the climbing routes on which the incidents occurred was 5.6. This is about the same as in the previous year. (Source: Mohonk Preserve)

## **RAPPEL ERROR—CLIPPED TO ONE ROPE, FALL ON ROCK**

### **Oregon, Smith Rock State Park**

On February 4, John Elgin (24) fell 60 feet after failing to rig his rappel properly. All that is known is that another climber shouted to Elgin to recheck his rig as he prepared to

rappel. Apparently he only clipped in to one of the double strands. (Source: Jeff Sheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

## **FALL ON ROCK WHILE SETTING UP RAPPEL**

### **Oregon, Rocky Butte**

On February 24, Allison O'Grady (21), a Pacific University junior, fell from the top of Rocky Butte as she and a companion were setting up a rappel so they could descend their climb of the butte. She suffered head injuries and was in critical condition. We do not know whether she was wearing a helmet. (Source: Jeff Sheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

## **FALL ON ICE**

### **Oregon, Mount Hood, Leuthold Couloir**

On May 28, approximately 0600: Three of us (Michele and Tim McCall, and Ken), climbers from Eugene Mountain Rescue, were climbing the Leuthold Couloir route. A party of six was ahead of us. The last rope team of two fell about half way up the route. The lead climber, George Garcia (46), fell; the second, Craig Sleight (38), attempted an arrest. George was already falling too fast and he pulled Craig off his arrest. George and Craig fell approximately 800 feet before their rope caught on an ice horn and stopped the fall (about 600 feet above a large crevasse).

We summoned the two other rope teams from the victims' party and quickly down-climbed to offer aid. We found the injured pair quite tangled in their rope and in much better condition than expected. Craig had several abrasions, a deep laceration in his thigh and a fractured arm. He was able to walk out with Ken to Illumination Saddle where the Timberline Lodge snowcat evacuated him. George was too seriously injured to walk. He was very disoriented and he had severe pain in his shoulders and ribs. The other members of his party reached us and we called for assistance on a cellular phone that they were carrying. We knew that it would be several hours before help would arrive and that it was too dangerous to stay in the couloir.

Tim, climbers from George's party, and I lowered George on belay with two attendants to a relatively safe place on the Reid Glacier. The lower took about four hours due to difficult terrain and George's condition. We secured George on the Glacier and monitored his vital signs. He appeared to be slipping into shock. Two medics from the American Medical RAT team arrived about five and a half hours after the fall. They treated George with fluids, oxygen, and pain medication which helped to stabilize George's deteriorating condition. About an hour later a helicopter and medics from the 304th Air Rescue of the Air Force Reserve arrived to evacuate George. Several climbers and the medics lowered George to the landing site and he was flown to the hospital.

## **Analysis**

When climbing a route like Leuthold Couloir, a speedy ascent is essential. A party must ascend quickly to avoid ice and rock fall danger. When conditions feel comfortable, many people climb this route without protection. However, this accident shows that under these conditions the snow was too hard for one climber to hold another's fall. A running belay in this case probably would have held George's fall or at least slowed it enough for Craig to be able to hold his arrest.

With all of the talk today about the expense of climbing rescues, I want to comment that this rescue was handled mainly by the injured climbers' party and our party that just