

with an alpine specialist. Because of failing daylight and the severe injuries, a rescue had to be performed quickly. (Source: Kananaskis Country Alpine Specialist)

### **Analysis**

Climbing ropes can easily cut through slings when they dynamically rub against each other. Most climbers are likely aware of the risk of this practice, yet some continue to take their chances with it. A rappel instead of a lower would have prevented this accident. (Source: Geoff Powter)

## **SLIP ON ICE, FAULTY USE OF CRAMPONS, CLIMBING UNROPED**

### **Alberta, Smith-Dorrien Valley, French Creek**

On November 20, L.S. (24) and a partner climbed an ice flow above French Creek on the east flank of Mount Burstall, about thirty minutes from the trailhead, and then proceeded to descend shortly before 1300.

While rappelling from the top to an icy ledge, one of L.S.'s crampons came off. Once on the ledge, the climbers decided to traverse and then scramble down rocks to the start of the climb. L.S. removed his other crampon and then started across the ledge, but slipped on the ice and tumbled about 15 meters down a low-angled part of the first pitch before free-falling another five meters to the base. He suffered a bad cut of the upper lip and teeth, complained of a sore right ankle, lower back, and neck, and could not remember falling, so he may have sustained a concussion as well, although his helmet stayed on.

L.S. tried to leave the area, but his pain was too great, even with help, so his companion went out to the road and flagged down Ranger Scott in the Chester Lake parking lot to ask for help in evacuating Lee. Authorities requested a helicopter, and the victim was fitted with a C-collar, then lifted by sling in a scoop stretcher and Baumann Bag to a road ambulance at 1630. He was treated by paramedics, then taken to Canmore Hospital. (Source: Kananaskis Country Alpine Specialist)

### **Analysis**

It may have served the victim better to keep his remaining crampon on; the ice on the ledge proved to be far more slippery than anticipated. (Source: Geoff Powter)

## **FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, SELF-BELAY FAILURE**

### **Alberta, Kananaskis Valley, Kidd Falls**

On November 23, S.M. (21) and a partner set off to climb the big waterfall below Mount Kidd's Gunbarrel Gully above Galatea Creek, obvious from Kananaskis Highway 40 south of the mountain. Early in the day, S.M. was leading high above his belay, when he stopped to place a screw for protection. While doing so, his tools pulled and he fell some 20 meters, sustaining two fractured and one crushed vertebrae. He was unconscious for approximately five minutes, but then revived, complaining of back pain. He had a deformity in the thoracic region of his back, so his partner left him at the base of the falls to hike out for help, and called Kananaskis Emergency Services about noon. (Source: Kananaskis Country Alpine Specialist)

### **Analysis**

The condition of the ice on this warm day may have contributed to the victim's tools pulling. Placing protection lower on the climb would have perhaps prevented the victim from hitting the bottom of the climb. (Source: Geoff Powter)