

FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE PROTECTION**Alberta, Mount Rundle, The Professor Falls**

On November 23, R.R. was leading the second pitch of this popular Grade III, WI4 route. About twenty feet up the second pitch, he placed his second screw but did not like the placement. He then placed a third screw to back it up, clipped it and then put his weight on it. Both screws failed and he fell to the bottom of the pitch injuring his knee. His partner and nearby climbers lowered him to the base of the route. His partner then went for help. He was evacuated with heli-sling by park warden rescue crew shortly after. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service)

Analysis

The dependability of protection in ice is sometimes circumspect, occasionally to the point that apparently good screws will hold little better than body weight in poor ice. The possibility of gear failure needs to be factored into decisions about frequency and location of screw placements. (Source: Geoff Powter)

RAPPEL ERROR—INADEQUATE PROTECTION**Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mount Murchison, Murchison Falls**

On November 23, a party of two were beginning the rappel descent of this waterfall route (180m, V, WI4). On their third rappel, the first climber got part way down the ropes, yelled, and fell down a few hundred feet to the bottom of the route. His partner (along with another nearby party of two) continued down uneventfully. They determined from his massive head injuries that P.E. was dead and walked out for assistance. They reported the accident late that night to the Warden Service. The victim was evacuated the next morning by heli-sling.

Analysis

The climber was not using a prussik to back up his rappel and he was using an ATC to rappel on two 8.5mm ropes. The ends of the rappel ropes were not knotted. When rappelling on small diameter ropes, extra caution must be used as there is less friction and it is therefore easier to lose control of the rappel. In this case it is possible that the ropes were wet or iced, and that may have contributed to losing control of the rappel. Having no backup did not leave any room for error. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service)

FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING UNROPED, FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS**British Columbia, Mount Revelstoke National Park, Mount Macbeth**

On June 29, a relatively experienced climber, upon reaching the summit of Mount Macbeth, unroped and fell through the cornice. His body was recovered by heli-sling the following day approximately 330 meters below.

Analysis

Other members of the party stayed roped at the same location, and stated that they advised the victim to also remain tied in. He did not listen to their advice, and then stepped into an area that the others said they would not go near because of obvious cornice potential.

Why the victim chose to forsake both the advice and risk the obvious hazard is un-