

At 0210, the Talkeetna Ranger Station was notified of the incident by Park Dispatch. The NOLS party had prepared an LZ at the 12,200 foot camp. The Park's contract LAMA helicopter with Pilot Doug Drury and Ranger Roger Robinson departed at 0546. Hudson Air's 206 with pilot Jay Hudson and SCA Doug Demarest departed at 0556 to fly cover for the helicopter. Weather was clear and calm allowing for a direct flight to Karstens' Ridge via the East Buttress. The LAMA landed at 0637 and was back in the air with Giesen at 0644. Giesen was given oxygen in flight and flown straight to Talkeetna.

Upon reaching Talkeetna, Giesen's pulse was 72 and his respirations were shallow at 26. His skin color and condition were normal. An Alaska Air Guard Pavehawk helicopter landed at 0704 and transported Giesen to the Alaska Regional Hospital in Anchorage, where it was determined that Giesen had sustained a pneumothorax.

Analysis

A pneumothorax is a life threatening injury that requires immediate medical attention. The NOLS party made the right decision to evacuate Jonathan Giesen as quickly as possible. This party had excellent communication through the use of a cellular phone and an aircraft radio. Due to their remoteness on the north side of the range, these forms of communication became a real life-saver. (Source: Roger Robinson, Mountaineering Ranger.

(Editor's Note: First, a correction from last year's ANAM in the section on Alaska. On page 17, it was reported that Dennis Gum was experiencing "chain stokes' breathing." That should, of course, read, "Cheyne-Stokes..."

A final note is about a climber from Poland who was issued two Violation Notices upon returning from his climb on Mount McKinley. One was for disposing of food at 11,000 feet, and the other for disposing of fuel, food, and garbage at 14,200 feet. He stated "I was too tired to pack it out, it was so heavy." He did say also that he was sorry for leaving it.

In any case, the business of citations for such things as this and "creating a hazard" has become a part of mountaineering rangers' routine.)

RAPPEL ERROR—ROPE ENDS UNEVEN, FALL ON ROCK, NO HARD HAT Arizona, Oak Flats

On April 6, following a bouldering contest in the area, Paul (25) and his climbing partner (24) went for a climb about a half mile from the primary bouldering area, where there is some quality granite. Paul had just completed following a single pitch 5.9 route and was preparing to rappel. He was wearing a seat harness. The rope had been doubled so it could be retrieved at the bottom. Apparently, the two rope ends did not meet at the bottom. Within about 30 feet of the top, Paul was rappelling when the remaining strand pulled free. He fell approximately 35–40 feet to the bottom.

An orthopedic physician climbing in the area heard the yells for help and began to assess and stabilize him while someone drove to our rescue camp for help. The rescue team had been breaking down from the rescue/ medical standby at the contest and responded, notifying the local agencies and arriving on scene within minutes.

Paul was unconscious and largely unresponsive the entire time. He was splinted, back boarded, insulated, intubated and I.V.s were initiated. His breathing had to be assisted with Bag Valve Mask. Due to the terrain and length of evacuation, the team chose to activate the Arizona DPS Ranger 41 from Phoenix early, to perform a short haul extraction (litter and attendant attached via rope underneath the helicopter). Paul was packaged in a

Bauman Bag and extracted with a paramedic rescue team member to a nearby Heli-Spot, where he was turned over to Eagle Air Med and flown to Phoenix, some 70 miles west.

His injuries included a left occipital/parietal skull fracture and concussion, left arm radial, ulnar and wrist fractures, left hip fracture and left leg tibia/fibula and ankle fractures. He was left temporarily unable to speak. Paul was treated and sent to surgery at Phoenix' Maricopa Medical Center, and spent about three weeks in Surgical Intensive Care. Extremely fortunate, he is expected to have near 100% recovery.

Analysis

The rope had been moved by the time of our arrival but was intact. The anchor at the top was reported as intact as was the harness. There was no apparent equipment failure or fracture.

Certainly, this all underscores again the value that companions and bystanders play early in an incident. This mission also would have taken much longer had the team not been in the area, and Short Haul (or cable hoisting) is not an option which is available everywhere or to all public safety agencies. Most areas in the country still do not have rope rescue teams who can comfortably operate in the wilderness. Reporting accurate information, early is critical. It may be the difference between life and death, but more often it is the difference of having some residual pain or discomfort versus having a life long limp or paraplegia or other disability—not being able to climb anymore.

If you are not specific with what you perceive are the technical needs of the mission, local agencies will many times send a local fire department or police officer to “check it out” before activating any technical rescue resources.

The key elements to report to 911 (or your local equivalent) are as follows:

1. Your buddy's condition. Is the person in a life threatening situation? Could he or she survive the night or a lengthy response?
2. Access to the scene. Does there appear to be a road head (for ambulance or truck access) or Heli-Spot (100 feet by 100 feet, no obstructions) at least within 1/4 mile? If not, and your climbing buddy is unconscious or has a serious injury tell 911 that you need a wilderness rescue team with rope skills, and tell them that vehicles or helicopters will not be able to get close. In the game of wilderness rescue, this report, along with minutes, count.

Another consideration is whether it is a fifth class approach or fourth class with severe exposure to access your buddy. If it is, specify the need for a CLIMBING rope rescue team. (Source: Tim Kovacs, Ops Leader, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Mountain Rescue, Central Arizona Mountain Rescue Association)

(Editor's Note: Tim Kovacs pointed out that an extremely small percentage of our total missions were climbers or mountaineers. The vast majority [99%+] were hikers and other non-climbers who were in over their heads, and for that reason are not reported here.)

EQUIPMENT FAILURE—ASCENDERS CAME OFF ROPE, FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE SELF-BELAY

California, Yosemite Valley, El Capitan

On May 27, Robert Jatkowski (30) was cleaning pitch 28 of the Shield, while his partner, Uwe Reissland (38) waited at the belay above.

After finishing a long left-facing vertical corner, Jatkowski reached a Lost Arrow pi-