

the rope slowed his fall and he was not injured.

Hansen and Williams had been rock climbing together for about four years, but they were fairly inexperienced ice climbers. (Source: "News and Observer," Raleigh, NC, January 20, 1997).

(Editor's Note: Aram Attarian, who helps collect data from North Carolina, indicates that this is the second fatality from ice climbing in ten years.)

FALL ON SNOW—FAULTY USE OF CRAMPONS

Oregon, Mount Hood, South Side

On April 4, a climber (32) was glissading below Crater Rock when his crampons snagged on hard snow, resulting in a fractured tibia. (Source: Jeff Sheetz, Portland Mountain Rescue)

(Editor's Note: Perhaps we should put New Hampshire guide George Hurley's mantra on all crampons: "There is no good reason for glissading with sharp spikes on our feet.")

FALL ON SNOW, CLIMBING ALONE AND UNROPED

Oregon, Mount Hood

On May 19, Carlos Loria (age unknown) was descending the Coe Glacier after making the summit. He slipped and fell 700 feet, fracturing his neck. He had been reported overdue by his brother. Rescuers found him, noting lacerations on his face, slight hypothermia and the cervical injury. He was helicoptered to Portland.

He had been accompanied by his dog, Buckwheat, but the dog was not in evidence. A month later, the dog appeared at the Cooper Spur Inn. He had apparently survived on snowmelt and berries. As the newspaper reporter said, "Too bad Buckwheat can't fill us in." (Source: Hood River County Sheriff's Office and "The Oregonian," June 25, 1997)

FALL ON ROCK, EQUALIZED SLING FAILURE

Oregon, Smith Rock State Park

On June 7, a climber was being lowered by his partner after climbing the route, Easy Reader (5.6) at the Dihedrals in Smith Rock State Park.

After descending about 15 feet, the anchor sling failed sending the climber free falling approximately 60 feet. He landed on his feet, hip, arm and body in that order, and suffered numerous fractures.

Other climbers in his group provided immediate care until EMT's from the Redmond Fire Department arrived. About 45 minutes after the accident, he was evacuated by helicopter to a Bend, Oregon hospital.

Analysis

After the evacuation, two climbers climbed an adjacent route to inspect the anchor system. A locked carabiner remained in each hanger, and a locked and regular carabiner were on the rope. From this it was concluded that the single, equalized sling failed for some reason. The lead climber had set up the anchor system and then rappelled down to belay the climber. For climbers that had considered an equalizing sling bombproof, the accident came as a shock.