FALLING ROCK

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Goat Mountain

On September 14 M.D.L.C. was climbing with D. C. on a route called Twilight Zone when he was hit in the right hand by rockfall. His thumb was badly crushed and almost amputated. D. C. called Kananaskis Emergency Services for assistance. K. E. S. responded with a helicopter and several EMS personnel. The EMS personnel were heli-slung to the base of the climb where D. C. had lowered the victim. M.D.L.C. was slung out in a screamer suit and then transported to the Banff Hospital for treatment. (Source: George Field, Public Safety Specialist, Kananaskis Country)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY–ROPE TOO SHORT

Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Back of the Lake Crag

On September 15, after completing Imaginary Grace (5.8), a climber was being lowered out from the anchors by his partner. The route is 30 meters long and their rope was 50 meters long. The rope went through the belay device and he fell 10 meters to the ground, sustaining ankle and back injuries. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service)

AVALANCHE, FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE PROTECTION

British Columbia, Rocky Mountains, Mount Dennis

On March 14, a party of three were climbing Guiness Gully (III, 4), a moderate ice route. The leader had completed the second pitch when a wet avalanche came down the gully. He had 50 meters of rope between him and the other two climbers at the belay below. The other two climbers had another 50 meters of rope stacked between them. None of the three climbers was clipped in to anchors. The upper climber managed to hug a tree at his belay and was not swept down. The two lower climbers were swept down with one of them ending up at the bottom of the first pitch, sustaining a forearm fracture and leg lacerations.

Warden service rescuers nearby witnessed the accident. Two rescuers ran up the approach to assess and treat the injured climber. The injured climber was heli-slung to a waiting ambulance shortly afterwards. The other two climbers, as well as other climbers on nearby routes, were evacuated by heli-sling, as well as other climbers on nearby routes due to the extreme avalanche hazard.

Analysis

As with many waterfall ice routes in the Rockies, avalanche hazard is a constant concern. When climbers left the parking area that morning, it was raining lightly. Unfortunately most of them did not see that as an indication of rapidly increasing avalanche hazard. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service)

FALL ON ROCK, CLIMBING UNROPED

British Columbia, Selkirk Mountains, Grays Peak

Two climbers departed the Gibson Lake parking lot in the early morning of July 16 and traveled through dense bush for several hours to the base of the west face