

terrain. Also, the leader did not protect this section, which might have helped to offset the lack of proper crampons. One method of placing protection here, yet saving on weight, would have been to cut bollards into the ice and sling them. It was an easy section of ice, yet slippery and dangerous, as is the nature of ice.

Snyder did execute a proper self arrest, which minimized his injuries. Unfortunately, when he gave up the team's only ice ax to his partner, he was unable to hold his position. (Source: Jim Detterline, Mark Magnuson, Mark Ronca—Rangers, Rocky Mountain National Park)

TRANSIENT ISCHEMIC ATTACK (TIA)

Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park, Glacier Gorge

At 12:15 pm on August 5, I (43) suffered a transient ischemic attack (TIA) four pitches up The Barb on Spearhead.

As I belayed Kelli's (my climbing partner) lead of the fourth pitch I began to have strange sensations in my left leg. The small stance I was standing on was cramped, and I tried to shake things off without success. Gradually, over a period of about 15 minutes (and as Kelli completed the 40-meter pitch and arrived at the next belay) I lost the ability to weight the leg, and noticed my left hand going numb. As she put me on belay, I yelled up that I was having some troubles but would try to climb anyway. I cleaned the belay anchor and attempted to climb but could not move. At this point we decided to retreat. There was only one other party on the face, high on Syke's Sickle, so our efforts would have to be unaided. I reset the anchors, and after a brief discussion we decided Kelli would down-climb the upper part of the pitch (runout face climbing, by the way) to within the 30-meter mark of the rope and set an anchor to lower off of and clean the pitch. By the time she reached me at the belay I was losing the ability to speak and could no longer keep my body positioned upright. However I did not suffer any loss of consciousness or mental function.

Below us were a series of overhangs that would make a plumb line rappel retreat to the ground impossible with a single 60-meter rope. We were about 25 meters above Middle Earth, a variable ledge system that crosses the entire face. I suggested the best way off would be to traverse Middle Earth to the route Syke's Sickle where I knew rap anchors were. We set anchors and rappelled to the ledge (I was able to use my right hand to brake and just let the left side of my body bump and slide against the wall), and then Kelli led across the ledge system, placing gear where necessary so I could pull on it as I dragged myself to follow. We found anchors on Syke's Sickle and after two more rappels were on the ground.

Kelli ran to some fellow climbers packing up to leave, and one of them began to run out to the trailhead for help while his partners came to my aid. Through a series of fantastic coincidences, Geoff Friefeld, a doctor friend of mine (albeit a breast cancer specialist) was at Black Lake and had a brand new set of walkie-talkies. His party started back to the trailhead as he immediately ran up to lend us assistance. Through a series of radio relays, word reached the

trailhead within 45 minutes, and a helicopter (already on its way up from Denver to assist a broken ankle victim on Longs Peak) was diverted to me. Geoff and one of the climbers assisted me down the talus to a small cairn where the helicopter could land. By the time it reached me my symptoms had mostly resolved. I was in the emergency room at Boulder Community Hospital by 6:00 p.m.

Analysis

This was an unexpected major medical emergency in a relatively remote location, and therefore it is difficult to suggest preventive measures. A 10:00 a.m. start for this route is certainly later than recommended, but we felt confident we could complete the climb in a few hours. It was very fortunate that I did not lose consciousness during the incident. Once we decided we were capable of a self-rescue (indeed we had few options), the fact that we had only a single 60-meter rope significantly changed our options for retreat. Our self-rescue was aided by a thorough knowledge of the rock wall we were climbing on. It was critical knowing the location of the overhangs below that barred a straightforward retreat, the location of anchors on the neighboring route Syke's Sickle, and the high/low points of the talus cone below the wall. It was also important that we were both able to keep our cool and think clearly throughout a very scary situation.

I thank Kelli for helping to save my life. I have fully recovered and, some medical concerns aside, am now back to my old climbing ways. (Source: Steve Levin)

FALL ON ICE, CLIMBING UNROPED, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park, Longs Peak

On August 8 at 0745, Scott McLeod (23) and Dana Drummond (age unknown) were ascending the North Chimney (II AI 1 5.6) on the East Face of Longs Peak. Although primarily a rock route, the North Chimney contained hard alpine "black ice" at its base and as patches inside the chimney. They were ascending unroped in order to get a faster approach to the Diamond Face. McLeod slipped on ice and fell 70 feet down the North Chimney. McLeod landed on both feet but sustained closed injuries to his left ankle and right heel, as well as minor abrasions to legs and arms. McLeod rappelled the remainder of the distance down North Chimney with the assistance of other climbers. Rocky Mountain National Park rescuers met McLeod at the base of the chimney, splinted his injuries, and transported McLeod to a landing zone area on Mills Glacier. Flight For Life medical helicopter picked up the patient and transported him to St. Anthony's Central Hospital in Denver, CO.

Analysis

The North Chimney Route is frequently used as an approach to highly technical pure rock climbs on the Diamond Face of Longs Peak. However, the North Chimney may be considerably more dangerous than the Diamond routes due to poor quality rock, loose rock, frequent rockfall, black ice, occasional large icicles falling out of the D1 exit chimney from the top of the Diamond, and multiple parties climbing on loose rock. There have been an increasing num-