

plan is important as well, as it is easy to make errors in navigation in difficult conditions. (Source: Greg McDonnell, Parks Canada Warden Service, Gord Irwin, Edwina Podemski)

## **FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION FAILED—ROCK BLOCK, FAILURE TO TEST HOLD**

### **Alberta, Jasper National Park, Hidden Valley**

On May 19, Peter R. (49) and Jack W. were climbing a single pitch route in Hidden Valley, a quiet climbing area east of Jasper. While leading, Peter decided to sling a large block to use as protection. When weighted, the block pulled out and Peter fell about 20 feet onto a scree slope, tumbling down to a point level with his belayer. His first piece of protection prevented him from falling any further; however, the large block fell on and crushed his right ankle. After making him as comfortable as he could, his partner ran down to the road, 40 minutes away, and phoned Parks emergency dispatch. Park Wardens responded on foot to the accident scene, where they stabilized the patient and splinted his foot. Another Warden and a Jasper Medic flew into the scene and evacuated the injured climber by helicopter sling rescue to an ambulance waiting at the road.

### **Analysis**

Rock quality in this part of the world can be quite suspect at times, especially on climbs that do not receive a high traffic volume. There is ample shattered limestone at the bottom of a number of the routes in Hidden Valley to provide clues about the rock quality in the area. Climbers would do well to visually inspect chosen natural protection carefully before weighting it. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service, Jim Mamalis, Edwina Podemski)

## **FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY, EXCEEDING ABILITIES**

### **Alberta, Jasper National Park, Morro Slabs**

On June 22, a family group and friends were climbing at Morro Slabs, a low angle practice area near the road, east of Jasper, Alberta. The group was being supervised by the father of the accident victim. Some of the party were climbing on top-ropes, while others were practicing rappelling. One of the rappellers, Jacob (20), who was relatively inexperienced, was being belayed from the top of the climb on a separate line by a friend, who was using a figure 8 on his harness. The belayer was positioned between the cliff edge and the rappel anchor, but was not tied in to the anchor and did not have a helmet or shoes on. The rappeller was descending too quickly for the belayer to keep up, so he was pulled off the top of the slab and over the edge of the climb. He fell 60 feet to the base of the slabs.

The accident was witnessed by a passing motorist, who phoned into the Parks dispatch. Wardens quickly hiked into the site and stabilized the patient, who had suffered minor lumbar spine injuries and various scrapes and bruises. More wardens flew in by helicopter and evacuated the patient via helicopter sling rescue system to the road.